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Sustainable Forestry For The Marginalized Peoples: A Comparative Study Of Two Forestry Programs In Bangladesh And Canada

by

Shawkat Shareef

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Sustainable forest management has become a catchword in many developing and developed countries around the world due to rapid depletion of forest resources and resulting socio-economic concerns and environmental degradation. This study is about two sustainable forestry programs undertaken by two non-governmental organizations in Bangladesh and Canada. In Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) operates a Social Forestry program that emphasizes mostly the participation of poor rural women as they are the most disadvantaged section of the population in that country. In Canada, the Long Beach Model Forest Society (LBMFS) carries out a Sustainable Forestry program in Ucluelet, British Columbia which was initiated by the federal government of Canada. This program focuses, among other forest stakeholders, on the First Nations communities and seeks the latter's participation to create a model for sustainable forest management. This study develops a comparative analysis of these two forestry programs along three major dimensions: goals and objectives, nature of public participation, and land tenure arrangements. In the process, two separate but related analyses are done. First, a descriptive comparison of theory and practice of each of these three dimensions for BRAC and LBMFS is undertaken in order to show the discrepancies between what they say and what they really do at the ground level. Then, an organizational analysis is carried out, based on contingency, resource dependency and collaboration theories, to show the reasons for these existing gaps, for both organizations. While there are enormous existing socio-economic and geo-political differences between

Bangladesh and Canada, it is argued that there are similarities and differences between BRAC's Social Forestry and LBMFS's Sustainable Forestry programs along those three aspects mentioned above. In conclusion, some policy suggestions are proposed to facilitate more effective sustainable forestry programs and practices in these and other similar contexts.

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CHAPTER 1

General Introduction

Worldwide forest depletion has had negative impacts on the ecology and economy in every individual country (FAO 1997). In both developing and developed countries, loss of forest resources and lack of holistic consideration of human welfare have become major eco-political issues that directly affect the socio-economic, cultural, and political spheres of the population of these countries. Population growth and related increases in rural poverty have placed higher demand on subsistence forest products in developing countries. As a result, multi-faceted environmental and economic problems have emerged (Krishnaswamy 1995; Ascher 1995; FAO 1988; Arnold 1991a; Holmén and Jirström 1995). In some developing countries, the national governments are responsible, along with the poor rural people, for massive destruction of forests for commercial logging, tourism development, and agricultural expansion (Malla 1997; Shreshtha et al. 1997; Khator 1989). In the developed world, corporate pressure on the forests for profit maximization has placed the forest industries and the forest-dependent communities in conflicting situations over the issue of sustainable forest management. In order to protect the socio-cultural and spiritual values of forests and to have an equitable share of profit, the forest-dependent communities in the developed world have started to demand more political power and authority in the forest management process. This used to be dominated by the multi-national forest industries and the national governments (Masse 1995; Berlyn and Ashton 1996; Dunster 1989; Mitchell-Banks 1994; Duinker et al. 1994). In spite of the diversity of situations and factors related to forests, therefore, both developing and developed countries face the common problem of environmental degradation through poverty, deforestation and lack of concern for the socio-spiritual values of the forests. In recent years some alternative options of forest management have been put into practice or are under policy considerations in these two worlds. The major objectives of these alternatives are to provide the poor with adequate forest resources for their livelihood with the ultimate aim of halting deforestation and reducing poverty, as well as including the forest-dependent communities in the forest management process. These options range from joint management of forests by the government and the local community (joint forest management), sharing forest management by the corporations and the forest-dependent community (co-managed forest) to decentralized forest management by the local community people (community or social forestry). The different variants of sustainable forest management practice have received considerable attention among social scientists, policy makers, and both government and non-government organizations.

The present study deals with two sustainable forestry programs in Bangladesh and Canada undertaken by two non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Bangladesh case will highlight the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) as the organizer of a big but scattered Social Forestry program. For the Canadian case, the focus is on the Long Beach Model Forest

Society (LBMFS) of Ucluelet in British Columbia. It is one of the eleven Model Forest Programs initiated by the federal government in 1991 as a part of a comprehensive program called "Partners in Sustainable Development in Forests." The analysis of these two forestry programs will be done along three major dimensions of these programs: goals and objectives, nature of public participation and the land tenure arrangements in which BRAC and the LBMFS operate. There will be two separate but interconnected analyses. In one phase, the theoretical issues of these three dimensions of each organization will be compared with the practical situations. In the other analysis, there will be an inter-organizational comparison of these three issues focusing on their respective theoretical and practical implications. Initially the theory and practice of goals and objectives, public participation, and land tenure arrangements will be compared for BRAC and the LBMFS separately. Then, these cases will be compared in terms of similarities or differences.

The developmental differences between Bangladesh and Canada are so different that a comparative case study may appear to be problematic. Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world. The population is 127.7 million in a land that is 69 times smaller in size than Canada. Despite continuous efforts of the development organizations in Bangladesh and from around the world, the infant mortality rate of this country is still one of the highest in the world (73 per 1000); under-5 mortality rate is 96; life expectancy at birth for women is 59 and for men 58; adult illiteracy rate for women is 71 percent and for men 49. A staggering 35.6 percent of the total population still lives below the poverty line (World Bank 2000). Overall, Bangladesh ranks 146th in Human Development Ranking (UNDP 2000). Canada, on the other hand, ranks 3rd according to the most recent HDI ranking by the UNDP and is one of the richest countries in the world. In spite of all these differences, this study will argue that a comparative study of two forestry programs of Bangladesh and Canada can provide valuable insights into the problems of sustainable forestry.

The purpose of this research is not to compare the quantitative aspects of BRAC's Social Forestry program and the Sustainable Forestry program of the LBMFS (the amount of money they spend, the size of the forestry programs etc.). The objective is rather to analyze the relationships between goals and objectives, philosophies of public participation and land tenure arrangements of these two programs. The Social Forestry program of BRAC and the Sustainable Forestry program of LBMFS have their own philosophies of public service delivery in addition to and above their respective governments. Both programs focus on *marginal* sections of the population. The Social Forestry program of BRAC focuses on poor rural women in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, the rural women are the victims of prolonged socio-cultural, political, and religious discrimination in the broader society. Helpless both in the family and the society and also subjugated by the dominant male culture, their very existence depends on the availability of access to income generating activities (Shahabuddin 1992; Choudhury and Ahmed 1980; Hamid 1996; Amin et al. 1994; Amin 1997; Kabeer 1997). BRAC, like many other NGOs in Bangladesh, is trying and in many cases has been successful, in improving the life conditions of the poor rural women. In

Canada, the First Nations can be called the 'marginal' section of the population particularly because of their exclusion from the forest management related issues. Authors argue that despite the historical evidence of socio-cultural dependence of the First Nations on forests, they are systematically excluded from the socio-economic returns from the forests by the creation of several legislative acts (Jaggi 1997; Notzke 1994; NAFA 1997a; NAFA 1997b). The Model Forest Program, which was started in the early 1990s, tries to give the aboriginal Indians in Canada, along with some other opportunities opened up by the treaty rights and creation of joint ventures with the federal, provincial, and the forest industries, a niche in the forest management decision-making process. Also, it is expected that the First Nation communities will be able to extract socio-cultural, economic, and political benefits from diverse management of forests and other natural resources.

At the outset, it is necessary to clarify the conceptual meaning of the term 'non-governmental organization (NGO).' This is important for the present study since these two organizations, the BRAC and the LBMFS, vary so widely in terms of their structural and functional characteristics. Since BRAC is an established organization with rural developmental programs, it falls well within the category of an NGO, theoretically and practically. The question is, does the Long Beach Model Forest Society fit into the typology of NGO? The term NGO is used to describe the organizations that are not, of course, governmental; beyond that, the existing definitions become very confusing. Most commonly it is argued that NGOs engaged in development programs for the disadvantaged, independent of the national government (Krut 1997; Bratton 1989; Vakil 1997; Roger and Roy 1995). Vakil (1997), talking about the abundance of terms that are used to classify the NGOs in the development literature, is able to find eighteen acronyms and notes that the list is not exhaustive. Therefore, authors are not unanimous about the exact nature of NGOs. While some writers describe the NGOs as "private" and "self-governing" and thus, exclude the possibility of an NGO that is dependent on the government for financial and technical support (Clark 1995; Sandberg 1994), authors like Gordenker and Weiss (1995) offer a typology of NGOs which tries to include all the NGOs in terms of their complicated relationships with the state. According to them, there are government-organized NGOs, quasi-NGOs and donor-organized NGOs which may or may not be fully dependent on the government. If we agree with Gordenker and Weiss as Vakil (1997) has, then Long Beach Model Forest Program may be viewed as a quasi-NGO since it entirely depends on the federal government for funds and technical support while, at the same time, attaining a degree of self-governance and private authority (NAFA 1997a). By the same token, BRAC is an NGO that relies on both the government and donors for funds, and simultaneously tries to generate its own sources of income and maintain an independent decision-making Governing Body (Lovell 1992). Accordingly, this study argues that both BRAC and LBMFS do qualify for the definition of NGO as given by Vakil (1997:): "self-governing, private, *not-for-profit* organizations that are geared to improving the quality of life of disadvantaged people" (italics added).

Background of the Study

Bangladesh has been experiencing substantial forest cover loss in the past twenty years. In the distant past, the forests in Bangladesh had always been systematically managed.[1] It used to have very rich flora and fauna with 15 percent forest cover even in the recent past (Rahman 1997). But the population pressure, associated with unrestricted cutting of trees by the rural people and unplanned encroachment for urbanization have reduced forest cover to as low as 7.8 percent at present (Rahman 1997; FAO 1997). Of the total forestland (1.77 million ha) the Forest Department manages 1.46 million ha. The remaining 0.31 million ha are newly man-made forests (Rahman 1997). However, the Rio Environmental Conference Agreement of 1993 instilled a new awareness and determination in the Bangladesh government. Consequently, the government came up with a National Forest Policy for the first time in November 1994. Now the government of Bangladesh hopes to bring 20 percent of total land under forest cover by the year 2015 (Rahman 1997). Due to incompatible management structure of the Forest Department that is built on unskilled manpower and consequent uneven distribution of technical support, the government of Bangladesh invites participation of the NGOs to achieve this goal since the NGOs approach the grassroots more effectively. BRAC, being the largest NGO in Bangladesh with 13,083 regular staff and 33,000 part time employees active in 55,443 villages of 61 districts, is involved in the tree planting programs (BRAC 1997a; 1997b).

Theoretically, there is no basis for direct comparison between the forest situations in Bangladesh and Canada. In fact, they represent two extremes of a bipolar scale. Unlike Bangladesh, forests in Canada are embedded in the culture, economy, and history of this country (Duinker et al. 1994; Notzke 1994). Forests cover over half of the total land area in Canada (total land area being 921.5 million ha and the total forest land is 417.6 million ha) and in 1999, total export of forest products rose to 44.2 billion dollars (CFS 2000). Traditionally, Canada's forests have been managed for commercial purposes to maximize revenue. While doing that, forest management practices have ignored the socio-cultural values of the local forest dependent communities including the First Nation people whose dependence on forests for economic, and spiritual sustenance is well-documented (CFS 1997; Notzke 1994; NAFA 1997a; NAFA 1997b; Jäggi 1997). However, the First Nation's views of sustainable forestry differ from that of scientific forest management practice and would result in lower profit if fully followed (Notzke 1994).

The First Nations communities or aboriginal communities in general, view humans and their environment as one totality or 'oneness', a belief deeply rooted in their respect for all the life forms on the 'mother earth' (Clayquot Sound Scientific

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[1] Rahman (1997) gives a brief but vivid historical description of how the forests in Bangladesh were managed in different political periods (British Bengal, former East Pakistan etc.). He argues historical evidences that systematic management of forests in Bangladesh have been in practice since the later part of the nineteenth century. With few private ownership of forest land here and there, the evergreen forests, the moist deciduous forests and the mangrove forests are mostly managed by the governments at different periods since 1874. It is interesting to note that the afforestation activities in different parts of Bangladesh have always accompanied these management systems that started in 1875, flourished during the 1070s and significantly geared up after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971.

Panel 1995:6). This philosophy inevitably stands in opposition to the existing "Cut and Run" policy exercised by the forestry industries (Laronde 1991). Aboriginal ethics advocates protecting land and the related resources out of respect for past, present, and the future generations. The unique relationship with the land that they have developed over centuries enables the aboriginal peoples to embrace knowledge of the land that is generated from their traditional use of the land that is known as the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). The principles of TEK include: holism (interconnectedness of all things), use of intuition (based on deeply held holistic understanding and knowledge), qualitative experience (knowledge is gained through intimate contact with flora, fauna and natural phenomena), knowledge sharing (it is powerful only if shared), responsibility (to protect the nature with refined sense of humility, not controlling the nature) (CSCP 1995; NAFA 1996).[2] As the first stewards of Canada's forests (that ended with first European settlement in the 1760s and the creation of the Royal Proclamation of 1763), the aboriginal communities demand to be treated as a 'third level' of government along with the federal and the provincial governments, not 'just another stakeholder' in the forest management practice (NAFA 1995:1). Actually, the importance and significance of TEK in sustainable development of natural resources has been recognized internationally and locally. In 1982, the Commission on Ecology of the International Union for conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) called for an initiative to understand the traditional lifestyles of the aboriginal peoples and use them in conservation of nature and rural development. Later in 1987, the recognition became solidified in the Brundtland Commission report, *Our Common Future* (Clayquot Sound Scientific Panel 1995). In Canada, the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (1992) committed to increased aboriginal participation and incorporation of their Traditional Ecological Knowledge in forest management practice. The major breakthrough came with the advent of 1992 Canada National Forest Strategy (CNFS). In this strategy, the federal and the provincial governments admit the necessity of aboriginal communities' involvement in sustainable forestry in a total number of 1172 Indian reserves which total about 1.4 million ha, less than 1 percent of Canada's total forest lands (Jäggi 1997; NAFA 1997b). The Model Forest Program was initiated in June 1992 to give the aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities a niche in the forest management practice. The Model Forest Program reflects a variety of cultural and ecological values such as protecting wildlife, bio-diversity, watersheds, recreation, and fisheries, as well as the economic value of wood supply (NAFA 1997a). There are currently eleven model forest sites, seven of which involve the First Nation communities as the major stakeholders in their traditional territories (NAFA 1997a). The Long Beach Model Forest Society is one of them.

This study may contribute to the already existing sustainable forestry literature in three major ways. First of all, many studies have been carried out, from within the organization and by outside observers, on Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee as an organization in general and also about its different

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[2] To know about the detail accounts of Traditional Ecological Knowledge and its principles, see Clayquot Sound Scientific Panel (1995).

development programs (health, credit, and education etc.). Except for some sporadic studies by its own researchers, however, there is no detailed account of the Social Forestry program that the present study undertakes. Again, the studies that focus on the Long Beach Model Forest Society's Sustainable Forestry program and its various components reflect views of the particular institutions, which funded those, research projects (e.g., the federal government of Canada, the Canadian Forest Service etc.).Therefore, the present study may well be the first detailed independent study on the LBMFS's forestry program. Most interestingly, there is no such comparative study of forestry programs that tries to compare two cases in the developing and the developed world as this study tries. From these perspectives, this study may be considered as an original contribution to detailed explanations of individual forestry programs and also, to the comparative analysis of sustainable forestry in developing and developed countries.

The thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 2 clarifies the major concepts. Thus, the concepts of public participation and state/NGO/donor relationships are discussed from different points of view. The organizational theories used in the study (contingency theory, resource dependency theory, and collaboration theory) are briefly explained and at the end of the chapter, the methodology of the study is discussed.

Chapter 3 gives an elaborate description of BRAC's origins and development philosophy. Also, the organization's structure, its relations with the government of Bangladesh and the donors are discussed. This background is useful to understand the overall functioning of BRAC's Social Forestry program that is discussed next. The goals and objectives, public participation philosophy and the land tenure arrangements are explained from an organizational point of view. A review of existing literature on BRAC, its Social Forestry program and other forestry program in Bangladesh is provided at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 4 describes the findings from the field visit in Bangladesh on BRAC's SF program. The practical situations in the issues of goals and objectives, public or women's participation in the program and the land tenure arrangements of SF program are discussed and briefly compared with the policy objectives discussed in chapter three.

Like chapter 4, Chapter 5, after a brief introduction to the Model Forest Program, describes the Long Beach Model Forest Society, its origin, development, organizational structure and relationships with the provincial and federal governments. Then, a theoretical description of the goals and objectives of the First Nations participation and the land tenure arrangements is given from the perspective of the organization. Finally, the existing literature on the LBMFS is reviewed with a special focus on the First Nation's participation in the forest management process in Canada.

In Chapter 6, the goals and objectives, First Nation participation in the LBMF program and the land tenure arrangements/ reform are discussed in light of empirical evidence gathered during fieldwork in Ucluelet, British Columbia. The gaps between the theory and practice of these three dimensions of LBMF program are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 7 focuses on a comparative analysis of BRAC's Social Forestry program and the forestry program of the LBMFS in terms of the organizational theories mentioned above. The organizational theories are used to explain the specific situations in these two programs and also, are used to find out the differences and commonalities between them. In the concluding section of the study (Chapter 8), a brief summary of the findings is provided. The study concludes with some policy suggestions for both BRAC's Social Forestry program and the Long Beach Model Forest Program.

CHAPTER 2

Participatory Development Projects: Public Participation and the NGO-State-Donor Nexus

The alternative development movement has evolved significantly since its advent in the early 1970s. Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) have come to be known as the proponent of alternative movements that seek to ensure democratic participation of people in development programs oriented toward the eradication of social inequality. Over the past two decades, the number of NGOs both in developing and the developed worlds has increased and they have increasingly been entrusted to carry out local and community-based development initiatives (Brohmann 1996). The issues of state-NGO relations have dominated the development literature on NGOs since the NGOs always use the concept of 'public participation' while describing their development activities with the poor in, mostly, developing countries. Simultaneously, the states and the donor agencies have come to acknowledge the 'innovativeness', 'sensitivity', and 'dedication' of the NGOs and their ability to deliver social services quickly and efficiently without much bureaucratic hassles (Brohman 1996). Combined with the issue of public participation, therefore, the issue of state-NGO relationships is crucial since the NGOs still have to work within the state rules and regulations to carry out development activities. Although this particular issue has been discussed primarily in the context of the developing countries, it can sometimes be used to explain the state-NGO relations in the developed countries as well. In this section, first I will briefly touch on the concepts of public participation, and state-NGO relations. This, I hope, will enable us to understand these issues in the contexts of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) and its Social Forestry Program in Bangladesh and the Long Beach Model Forest Society's (LBMFS) sustainable forestry program in Canada.

Public participation

Although the concept of participation has become an "imperative" both in alternative and traditional paradigms of development, it has remained an elusive concept to define and understand clearly. Participation remains a complex issue because of its multi-dimensionality and its complex relations to politics (Brohman 1996:251).[3] Most analysts have focused on the issues of the decision-making

[3] Majid Rahnema (1990) describes six reasons why the concept of participation has become so popular with government and non-government development institutions. First, the concept no longer posits a threat to governments, rather the governments are always willing to experiment with it for its low-cost advantage. Second, politically the concept has become attractive. The politicians would prefer a negotiation between them and their constituencies. Third, participation has brought in successful economic benefits from the financial institutions like the World Bank, Grameen Bank of Bangladesh and to the grassroots people who participate in credit programs. Fourth, participation has opened up possibilities for diversified investments by the organizations in grassroots programs. It is more effective than a traditional government-bureaucratic approach. Fifth, the NGOs have been using this concept to raise funds effectively from Northern donors. Even if this is only a 'lip service', using this term of participation has ensured free flow of foreign

authority of the community, local need-based planning activities, and equitable sharing of benefits from project activities in the discussions of public participation (Fleming 1991; Cornia et al. 1987; Fenster 1993). Some have developed a continuum of participation that generally represents good and bad practices of participation at the polar extremes. Oakley and Marsden (1984) contrasts participation at two extremes: at one end, participation means voluntary contributions of local people without any influence in shaping them, and at the other, participation may mean the active process of collaboration with local people or community controlling the projects.

Oltheten (1995) distinguishes two types of development projects—"blueprint" or "target-oriented" and "process-oriented." In the former, target groups are fit into pre-defined packages of services and the execution of the project, therefore, depends largely on the 'willingness' of people to do the required tasks. In the 'process-oriented' project, local people themselves define the process, needs and activities with collaboration of the external agents. Participation here reflects people's 'ownership' of and 'accountability' for different acts; the project supports them to identify the activities. The typology of participation developed by Pretty (1994) can be used to understand the nature of participation in target- and process-oriented programs. According to him, in the target-oriented programs, the participation is 'passive'—people participate after the project explains the benefits to them, whereas in the 'process-oriented' programs, the participation is 'interactive' in the sense that the planning, the activities are outcomes of joint analyses between the participants and the project. Similarly, Midgley (1986) draws lines between 'authentic' participation (where people control the project) and 'pseudo' participation where people are mere puppets of outsiders.

Cornwell's (1995) typology of participation is a more diverse and a multi-layered typology, unlike the two-dimensional extremes discussed above. He divides participation into six major categories. In 'Co-option', the local people are *chosen* by the outsiders who have absolute control in the action and the local people act as 'subjects' of the program. In 'Co-operation', the local people are assigned with predefined tasks with incentives and act as 'employees/subordinates' but the control of the project still remains in the hands of the outsiders. In the 'Consultation' type project, the situation improves only slightly. Here, the local people are asked to give their opinions on the action, but the outsiders decide on the course of action and the local people are treated by them as 'clients.' In 'Collaboration', there is immense potential for local action and research, because the local people work as collaborators, and have input in the decision making although the outside agents direct the course of action. In a 'Co-learning' process, local control over the action increases, the local people share responsibilities of action with the outside agents as 'partners' and most importantly, the local people and the outside agents share knowledge with each

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funds. Sixth, participation is connected to private sector development with a view that private companies would be able to deliver more services to the public if practicing participation. Thus, Rahnema calls the concept of participation a 'New Human Software' that is used by all—government and non-governmental organizations (pp. 201-203).

other to come up with the best possible solutions to the problems. Lastly, Cornwell attributes the best possible participation of the public to the 'Collective action' research where the local people set the agenda, implement it and make future directions without any outside assistance. Cornwell's typology therefore, helps to understand different actions that can still be called participatory, theoretically, but lack bottom-up directional process and thus, cannot be claimed as real public participation.

Underlying all of these typologies is the assumption that participation not only has an intrinsic value (democracy), but that it contributes to more enduring, self-reliant change. Majid Rahnema's (1990) philosophical treatment of the issue of public participation is based on the philosophy of the renowned adult educator Paolo Freire. Rahnema readily rejects any notion of participatory activity that is based on 'destructive', or 'manipulative', or violent objectives. For him, participation should always bear a 'positive' connotation and thus, remove any undesirable consequence (p. 208). The argument flows from the idea of participation as a *transitive* concept, again, a Freirian concept, that participation refers to "good" cause not "bad" ones and it serves *any* cause on the basis of 'moral, humanitarian, or social and economic grounds' (p. 203).

State/NGO/Donor Relation

The state/NGO/donor relationships are complex. This particular issue is dealt with some rigorous analytical discussions by many authors. Thus, Hadenius and Uggla (1996) describe the NGOs, both in the developing and the developed countries, as the representatives of civil society which is a "public space between the state and the individual citizen (or household)" (p. 1621). They argue that in order to be most effective in service delivery to the society, the NGOs must form network relationships among themselves, the members, the state, and the donors. For them, the state-NGO relationship is of a "mutual" nature. While they find the importance of civil society in its autonomy from the state, they warn against the danger of total independence from the state: the NGOs may need to relate to the state for funding, project implementations etc., but if they are to influence the public policy making of the state, they should not distance themselves too much from the state (p. 1628). However, Hadenius and Uggla see this relationship between the state and the NGO as reciprocal. To delineate the state-NGO relationship and the role of the state in particular, they draw a schematic picture of "state treatment of civil society" in which the treatment may range from 'hostile' through 'moderate' to really 'benevolent'. The hostile atmosphere encourages the state to repress civil society organizations, and blocks any chance of cooperation between the state and the civil society for political reforms. In the second stage of these hostilities, the state accepts autonomous organizations, but does not provide a space for it. In this kind of situation, participants learn to live without being too dependent on the state and, consequently, do not take the authority of the state for granted. The state loosens its grip on many aspects of service delivery. As a result, the state starts to loosen its authority and look for decentralization of authority. This eventually leads to the third stage where the state starts to create 'favorable institutional structures' for civil society to grow and flourish. However, decentralization does

not automatically ensure smooth functioning of NGOs or popular participation of the masses in development programs. If the local elite (or the 'traditional patrons' of the state) still remain powerful and control the state apparatus at the lower level of administration (which the authors believe to be the case for most of the developing countries), then decentralization of authority would bring little or no benefits for the local communities. The fourth and the fifth stages feature active state support and congruent policies to promote civil society. However, it is here where Headenius and Uggla would like to see civil society or the NGOs taking cautious step for not becoming too dependent on the state. Because, if they become so, it means that they become more distanced from their members—the people at the bottom level—in order to be more favorable to the state (or in their words, to be "men of the state"). In this situation, while the organization will still be able to deliver services externally, internally the leaders of the organization and the members become less connected, both in terms of transparency and accountability (p. 1634).

Dependence on the state for funds and other resources, at one end, and increased dependence on the external donors for funds at the other, basically serve the same detrimental functions for the NGOs. Hedenius and Uggla suggest that the donors should help the NGOs to be self-sustainable in the long run, even after the donor withdraws support. However, even after that, the most crucial thing, they believe, is the existence of strong state machinery with favorable legal and administrative systems so that the premise for strong civil society can develop.

Dependency on the state and the donor for resources are regarded as the major impediment to effective functioning of NGOs in development programs (Gordenker and Weiss 1995; Vakil 1997; Krut 1997; Arrosi et al. 1994; Roger and Roy 1995; Whiting 1991; Bebbington 1996). Clark (1997) agrees with Hadenius and Uggla on the varied relationship between the state and the NGO and the donors. For him, the state and the NGO can act collaboratively on some specific sectors of development that do not necessarily apply to other sectors (e.g. agriculture, health, education etc.). He suggests, with almost the same argument put forward by Hadenius and Uggla, that the best situation is an intermediate relationship between the state and the NGO in question, not too distant, not too 'cozy'. Unlike the previous authors, however, Clark devotes more time in illustrating the factors that hinder good state-NGO-donor relationships (Pp. 49-52). Very briefly, these factors are the following. First, lack of positive 'policy environment' on the part of the governments who suspect that NGOs oppose government power and therefore, should not be allowed to function freely. The NGOs, by the same token, would not try to bolster government programs or try to improve service delivery fearing that this might undermine their (and increase government's) popularity. This would lead to unhealthy state-NGO relations and consequently, to disastrous development programs. Further, there are the 'government factors' that include government's unwillingness to cooperate with the NGOs because its own mechanism is weak for service delivery and the jealousy of the government officials of the NGO officials' access to different resources. On the other hand, the NGOs themselves may maintain a low profile in order to avoid 'outside (or government) interference (the NGO factors). The

donors may pressure the NGOs to receive the funds that may lead to further government-NGO tension and this often leads to faster institutional growth than the management capacity of the NGOs to cope with the development activities. Clark concludes that to avoid these situations, the NGOs should be allowed by the state to exercise complete freedom in terms of getting funds and using these funds accordingly. However, this freedom should be coupled with, Clark believes, strict government regulations that will ensure the NGO accountability to the nation as a whole and will promote constructive growth of the NGO sector.

Tandon (1991) clarifies three major situations where the NGOs and the state interface. These divisions may be somewhat related to the too close, too distant, and moderate/intermediate relationship discussed previously. The first relationship is patron-client position where the NGOs simply carry out the state programs and receive funds, resources from the state. The second is hostile with both sides showing no signs of compromise. The third relationship is constructive because the state and the NGOs work in collaboration with each other and constantly find areas of agreement. Hulme and Edwards (1997) present a chronology of the state-NGO-donor relationships. It ranges from Southern state-Nothern NGO relationships to increasingly Southern NGO-Northern donor relationship with the Southern state's varying reactions to that relationship (for more detail, see ibid, Pp. 11-15).

BRAC and LBMFS as Organizations: In Light of Organizational Theories

The BRAC and the LBMFS are two different organizations where each develops and employs different strategies to carry out the common objective—sustainable forestry for marginal groups. In the case of these two NGOs, I would like to argue that three different theories of organizational behavior might be able to grasp the complex interplay of different tools and techniques employed to achieve the goals and objectives i.e., to ensure public participation and to strengthen the state-NGO-donor relationships. Particularly, they may be able to help understand the overall performance of BRAC and the LBMFS in doing sustainable forestry practice. The theories are contingency theory, collaboration theory, and resource dependency theory. Contingency theory will be used to understand the complex behavior of BRAC and LBMFS in carrying out sustainable forestry along three dimensions—goals and objectives, public participation, and the land tenure arrangements. Of these two organizations, BRAC is more established and exhibits the signs of a strong organizational bureaucracy and thus, qualifies easily to be analyzed by contingency theory. Also, Long Beach Model Forest Society's overall functioning as an organization can also be explained in terms of contingency theory, no matter how nascent and small it is compared to BRAC. Both of these organizations operate in specific environments influenced by their donors and other agencies related to them.

The Long Beach Model Forest Society emerged out of a collaborative effort initiated primarily by the federal government of Canada. The LBMFS falls under the Canadian Model Forest Program and is created to achieve sustainable development in forestry sector in the Long Beach area of Ucluelet, British Columbia. Hence, collaboration theory is better suited to understand the complex

interactions between different parties involved—the organizational staff, the partners or forest stakeholders particularly the First Nations, its administrative section, and the general public. However, collaboration theory is also useful to understand BRAC's Social Forestry program as collaboration between the state of Bangladesh and its various agencies linked with forestry issues and land tenancy is expected and have been argued for. Therefore, collaboration theory is also used to find out the limitations displayed by BRAC's SF program because of apparent failure of a collaborative effort with other government agencies. Resource dependency theory is, again, useful to understand both organizations since both BRAC and the LBMFS depend on external financial assistance to do achieve sustainable forestry in their respective situations. The next section will briefly explain these three theories in their basic forms.

Contingency Theory

Contingency theory is developed along the thoughts provided by different scholars at different times. Burnes and Stalker (1961), Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), Galbraith (1973), Thompson (1967), Perrow (1970), Woodward (1958, 1965)—all made significant contributions to the development of contingency theory.[4] In its most basic form, the theory asserts that organizations cannot have a single organizational structure that is fixed. Rather, the desired structure varies according to other organizational factors—its size or strategy. The latter are called contingency factors because the most favorable structure is contingent (or dependent) on these factors. Simply put, if an organization is small with only few employees then it will have a centralized authority where a single person will sit at the top of the hierarchy. If the organization is big then the authority will be decentralized and the decision-making power will be devolved down to lower levels of hierarchy. The contingent factors may be several: size, technology, strategy, and task uncertainty. These are, however, the internal features of an organization that are influenced by an external environment in which the organization is located or operates. The argument of contingency theory is that the organization can be effective in its operations if it can adapt to the external environment and can fit its structure to the contingency factors. For clarity, I take refuge of Brechin (1997) to explain the terms used above in some detail.

Technology is comprised of tools, procedures, and skills that are used to transform the "raw materials"—ideas or human skills—into services. *Structure* simply represents the organization's formal division of labor. For the present study it would mean whether BRAC management for social forestry is centralized or decentralized, the extent of its formalization, and the flexibility as exercised by the staff to carry out the program etc. *Task* is the "job" that the organization carries out. As BRAC does multiple jobs, for the present study the job or the task is the Social Forestry program. The *Environment* may be of two major kinds: *task environment* and the *institutional environment*. The former indicates the

[4] Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) coined the term "contingency theory," although it was Burnes and Stalker (1961) who are responsible for the development of the contingency theory of the organizational structure.

immediate organizations with which the focal organization interacts for raw materials, or to carry out particular activity. For BRAC's Social Forestry program, the task environment consists of BRAC and the European Union's Food Security Unit, and to some extent, the Forest Department of the government of Bangladesh. The institutional environment is the broader influence from the society—cultural norms, and the government policies.

Contingency theory can be summarized as follows.[5] In a small organization with a small number of employees, there are few levels of hierarchy and the decision-making is centralized. The top manager usually takes all the decisions and the other employees are hardly delegated any authority from the top. When the organization grows in size, many levels of hierarchy are created. The structure of the organization becomes differentiated. The decision-making authority becomes decentralized with the middle and the lower managers are delegated authority to take prompt decisions at the spots. This delegation of authority happens because of the complexity and size of the organization and the top managers do not want to take all the burdens of taking decisions for everything. However, in spite of that, the top managers retain control over major decisions like policy, strategies, allocation of capital and the budget amounts.

The bigger the organization becomes, more layers of specialization and division of labor are created. Each Department or work group is assigned distinct jobs to perform. The behavior of the organization increasingly becomes formal, routine, and written in rules and procedures. An impersonal web of reporting takes the place of direct personal supervision and in the case of large organization; the structure represents the *machine bureaucracy* (Mintzberg 1979, cited in Donaldson 1996). If the task of the organization is less uncertain and predictable, then it means that the organization will expand rapidly in scale and the work of any individual becomes formal, and a routine procedure. The greater the predictability of the employee behavior, the greater the amount of authority delegated to him from the top since the top managers do not have to worry about any unpredictable environment that the lower manager works in.

Donaldson likes to call the contingency theory 'the organization in its environment' approach since in the contingency theory the environmental factors are given more emphasis, given their influence on the internal factors of the organization—the size and innovation. It is argued that the environment not only put constraints on the organization in carrying out its task, but it also produces resources for exploitation for the focal organization (Pennings 1992). However, the organization also tries to adapt to the environment as much as possible because it affects the performance of the tasks it is doing and even its survival. Basically, contingency theory shows the need for a good match or fit between the contingency factors: structure, technology, and the environment. If the environment is stable, the task is less uncertain or routine, then a hierarchical organization with centralized decision making authority will perform its task well with routine technologies (it is called the mechanistic structure). On the other hand, if the environment is turbulent, then a flat or decentralized structure with non-routine technologies will work best provided there is good coordination

[5] This section draws on Donaldson (1996).

between the different units of the organizational structure. Overall, it is argued that the organization performs its task well as long as it maintains good match or fit between the organizational unit and the environment (Brechin 1997: 201).

Collaboration Theory

There are many versions of collaboration theory. For the present study, I will use the one constructed by Wood and Gray (1991). Wood and Gray review the definitions of collaboration provided by Westley and Vredenburg, Pasquero, Lodgsodon, Roberts and Bradley and come up with a comprehensive definition of collaboration that, I believe, is suitable for the present study to understand the LBMFS and its sustainable forestry program. According to Wood and Gray (1991:146), " Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain." The elements of this definition need some elaboration. First, there are 'stakeholders of a problem domain.' They might have similar or different interests and not all stakeholders are actively engaged in the process. Second, the stakeholders enjoy 'autonomy' in the collaborative process and retain their independent decision-making powers. Third, collaboration is an 'interactive process', which implicitly means that the stakeholders will engage in reciprocal communicative process under some (fourth) 'shared rules, norms and structures.' Fifth, the stakeholders must take 'decisions' or take actions in order for collaboration to happen in the first place although the collaboration may fail in its objective in the end. Sixth, the stakeholders must act toward achieving the 'domain's future' or their actions have to be domain oriented. Finally, there should be some 'outcomes' of the collaboration which may lead to possible change—social, political, economic, and ecological.

Collaboration theory stresses the role of a convener in bringing different stakeholders to the table for discussion about the problem domain. The convener identifies the stakeholders and through an 'unbiased/even-handed' approach sets the stage for collaboration to occur (Gray 1989, cited in Wood and Gray 1991: 150). The convener role depends on the very first situation that brought the convener in. Thus, if asked by the stakeholders in the first place, then the convener may be responsive to the problem domain and formally be perceived by the stakeholders as fair and legitimate. Here the convener will act as a facilitator as trusted by the stakeholders. If the initiative of a collaborative effort is taken by the convener, then the convener is supposed to be proactive and in the process of collaboration the convener will have a powerful mandate and informally, may persuade the stakeholders to work around the problem domain (Wood and Gray 1991: 152). The convener uses persuasion mostly because it needs to shape the interrelationships between the stakeholders. The convener's credibility is the most important attribute in this regard. Because the convener comes up with the idea of collaboration, it must have 'convincing', 'credible' arguments to persuade the stakeholders to participate (ibid, p. 153).

Although the stakeholders participate in a collaborative process, the interests of each stakeholder may not be the same. The interests may be shared, differing, or opposing. When the self-interests of the stakeholders and the

collective interests of the collaboration are the same, the collaboration becomes easy and result may be positive in achieving outcome. Differing interests do not interfere with one another and stakeholders with differing interests can still participate in collaborative process although the outcome is uncertain. However, if the stakeholders have opposing interests then the chances of a foiled collaboration is very high. The most important factor in any collaboration is 'mutual action' that produces benefits for different stakeholders.

The federal government conveys the philosophy of Canadian National Sustainable Development through the Model Forest Program. Pasquero (quoted in Wood and Gray 1991) views the federal government as the convener of the Model Forest Program. The federal government invites, but does not coerce, the different stakeholders to participate in the national sustainable development agenda. Here, the stakeholders assume a shared responsibility to bring about sustainable development practice and take over the original convener's role to persuade other stakeholders to participate in different Model Forest Programs. The role of the convener, in the case of the Long Beach Model Forest program, has been taken over by the organization—its paid staff, the Board of Directors, and the Administration Committee, and also, different Working Groups and the Advisory Committee. Here, the federal government participates in the collaborative process together with the provincial government, the First Nations and other sectors. In the present study, therefore, the term convener will be used to denote the organization, the LBMFS, in its totality, not the federal government itself.

Resource Dependency Theory

Resource Dependency theory was developed by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) and illustrated in their work *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependency Perspective.* The basic argument of this theory starts with the fact that every organization must depend on external resources for survival. Therefore, the focal organization must depend on other organizations and this dependence leads to the control of the focal organization by the external ones. The theory can be applied to the internal situations of the focal organization. Inside the organization, some people are more competent to draw resources from outside and thus, exercise, more power than others. In other words, resource dependency theory works at two levels of analysis: intra-organizational and extra-organizational (Donaldson 1995).

Resource dependency theory argues that the external pressures and the internal power configurations consequently mould the behavior of the focal organization. Eventually the focal organization tries to influence or alter the environment to reduce external dependency and retain, to some extent, its organizational autonomy. While it appears to be very simple objectivist mechanical causation, actually it is not. Pfeffer and Salancik attribute considerable importance to the subjective and ideological elements for the roles they play in the extra- and intra-organizational relationships. The organization reacts to the environment it perceives based on the organizational information system. It tries to influence the government, the donor etc. and struggles to get concessions from

them. Some people in the organization are more equipped than others to manage the extra-organizational relationships. Therefore, it is apparent that Pfeffer and Salancik do not treat the organizations as a mechanical device; rather they define the organizational processes as human ones and bring in the cultural issues of values, information, perception, secrecy, visiblity etc. to explain the causal chain. It gives the theory, as Donaldson says (1995: 130), 'a distinctively subjective sub-theme which intertwines with the objectivist sub-theme.'

The dependence and influence relationship sketched by Pfeffer and Salancik have curious effects. For them, the two organizations (focal and the external) relate to each other not in terms of an equal relationship. Instead, power (of the external organization and the personnel within the focal organization) arises from their asymmetric dependence (1978: 52). Simply put, the focal organization only receives valuable resources from the external agency and in return, it has very little to offer to the external organization. This uneven exchange makes the focal organization mostly vulnerable to the whims of the external agency. However, the authors contend that in spite of the dominating attitude from the external organization on the focal one, there is continuous struggle by the latter to reduce that dominance. In other words, the acceptance of the control of the external agency by the focal organization is hardly docile; instead, it is acceptance with resistance. Therefore, while Pfeffer and Salancik talk more often of deterministic relationship between the focal and the external organization, they have room for slight 'managerial discretion' however limited it may be (Donaldson 1995: 130).

In the context of the theoretical framework and the conceptual understandings discussed above, a few questions are posed for the present study. What are the organizational philosophies of BRAC and the LBMFS that mould their philosophy of sustainable forestry? What do they understand by public participation? How are their understanding of public participation are actually related to the women in BRAC's Social Forestry program and the First Nations in the LBMFS's sustainable forestry program? What are the goals and objectives of these two programs? To achieve these goals and objectives, what strategies, techniques do BRAC and LBMFS employ? How do the SF program of BRAC and the LBMF program relate to the respective state machinery? For resources, to what extent the donors influence these organizations? The answers to these questions will be sought both for the SF program of BRAC and the sustainable forestry program of the LBMFS along the issues of their respective goals and objectives, public participation, and the land tenure arrangement. The theories—contingency, resource dependency, and collaboration—will help understand the gaps, if any, between the theory and practice of these two forestry programs by two NGOs.

Finally, it should be noted that social forestry is just one of the manifold activities of BRAC. It does not work independently of other development programs. Rather, in terms of technical and financial assistance from outside, the relationship with the state and the donor in SF program is inevitably connected to BRAC's larger organizational scenario. However, in the present study, the focus is only on the SF program and thus, the analysis may not always grasp the larger

context of the reality of the SF program. In the case of the LBMFS, the only task is to implement sustainable forest management practice with different partners or stakeholders. So, a very rudimentary and partial organizational analysis of the LBMFS based on the organizational theories may not picture the whole socio-political context of the LBMFS project.

Methodology

This comparative case study is based entirely on qualitative research. I used primary and secondary sources such as published literature, organizational documents, and other documents on BRAC, its Social Forestry program and the Long Beach Model Forestry Society and the Canadian Model Forest Program. These sources are complemented with field visits to both the Social Forestry program sites of BRAC in Bangladesh and the Long Beach Model Forest Society in Ucluelet, Tofino of British Columbia in Canada. In total, I took twenty-six formal interviews with thirteen in each case. The fieldwork in Bangladesh was done during February-April, 1999. The field visits to the Long Beach Model Forest Society were done in two phases. The first phase was carried out in July-August, 1999 and the second phase was completed in January-February in 2000.

Catherine Lovell's (1992) *Breaking the Cycle of Poverty: The BRAC Strategy* serves as the basis of my analysis of BRAC and its Social Forestry program. Although some few years have passed since Lovell did this work, it still remains the most thorough organizational analysis of BRAC. As a consultant to BRAC for almost two and half years, Lovell had the opportunity to observe the organization from "inside". Lovell knew all the techniques of qualitative research, used them during her work experience in BRAC and interviewed staff from the upper, middle, and bottom level of management. Because of the time she had in BRAC she was also able interview numerous BRAC members (the women members of the Village Organization), government officials, donor representatives, and leaders of other NGOs operating in Bangladesh. Quite comfortably, therefore, Lovell's methodology can be regarded as a thorough and extensive one for the organizational analysis of BRAC. However, in qualitative study, the authenticity and accuracy of data often depend not on the familiarity of the researcher with the situations she is studying, rather depends significantly on her relative ignorance of the situation. The more unfamiliar she is with the situation, the more she is able to dig out the basic and obvious aspects of that situation (Lofland and Lofland 1995; Babbie 1998). Considering that, my perspective is rather different than Lovell's: I never worked for BRAC and apart from my previous interactions with the Chief Advisor to BRAC and the Sector Specialist of the Social Forestry program, I can comfortably be termed as an 'outsider' to the organization.

This particular NGO in Bangladesh has always attracted the attention of many outside researchers. Therefore, although I was an outsider to the organization, I received enthusiastic support from BRAC management and did not

have any difficulty to getting access to necessary resources.[6] While choosing samples for interviews in a qualitative research, the most important thing to remember is the representative ness of the samples (Fraenkel and Wallen 1996). If the samples are representative of the population from which they are derived, the ground for 'population generalizability' (p. 106) can be established. The organizational structure of BRAC its Social Forestry management paved the way for selecting appropriate individuals for interviews. Power relations in the management and the nature of my study (that is specifically focused on BRAC's SF program) helped significantly. I interviewed people from the top, middle, and lower level of Social Forestry management and from the grassroots level, the women members or participants of the SF program. Only one person was interviewed who is not directly involved with BRAC management. The Chief of the Food Security Unit of European Union in Bangladesh may not be involved with BRAC management, but given his position as the head of the major financier of the Social Forestry program, it was necessary to know his opinions about the program.

From the top management of BRAC, the Chief Advisor and the Sector Specialist (Social Forestry) were interviewed. The Chief Advisor provided much important information about BRAC's relations with the state and the donors. He is the one who manages, together with the Executive Director of BRAC, continuous communications with the foreign donors and the state bureaucracy. The Chief Advisor himself is a formal government bureaucrat and regarded within the organization as one of the most powerful people. I opted not to interview the Executive Director because he has been interviewed many times before and his ideas on BRAC's development philosophy are well known. Also, I could not manage to get hold of the Director of the Rural Development Program of which the Social Forestry program is only a small unit. However, the Director of the RDP is busy with overall management of the RDP, rather than the Social Forestry program itself. The Sector Specialist of the Social Forestry program is an obvious selection since he is the most experienced person in the SF program. Although he has a position at the head office in Dhaka, he has continuous communications with the middle and lower level SF managers through frequent field visits and weekly/monthly meetings at the head office.

The selection of two middle level officials of BRAC's SF program was shaped significantly by the selection of the areas that I visited. The selection of the sites was not easy. The SF program of BRAC is scattered all over Bangladesh and the BRAC management, when asked by me, could not produce a list of the areas where the organization has the SF program going on. Initially this made things difficult for me since without a list of the SF sites I really could not understand how to and from where to start. On the top of that, I had to think about the resource constraints—limited time and money. The BRAC management tried to

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[6] When I approached the upper management of BRAC through the Chief Advisor and the Sector Specialist of Social Forestry, BRAC management assured me of all possible cooperation during the entire field work. For the next few months, the BRAC SF officials gave me company when I visited the SF plantations. The BRAC management also provided motor transportation to go to different remote forestation sites.

send me to those places where the SF programs are older than other places and are regarded as "more successful" than others. However, after reading various BRAC reports on the SF program and talking to different SF officials in the head office, I decided to visit two areas. I chose an older site in order to get information on those women participants who are involved in the SF program for a while and a bit experienced with what is going on. This plantation is located in the northern corner of Bangladesh in the district of Nilfomari. The other site is located in the northeastern corner of Bangladesh known as Rajshahi. I chose the latter site intentionally because Rajshahi is my home district and I am familiar with the culture and people here. Also, Rajshahi has got some of the larger Agroforestry and roadside plantations of BRAC's SF program. I interviewed one Regional Manager (SF) from the Rajshahi office and one Regional Sector Specialist (SF) from the Nilfomari regional office. The middle level officers can be regarded as a communication bridge between the upper management and the low level SF management.

Three people were interviewed from the lower level SF management. One Program Organizer (Social Forestry), one Program Organizer (grassroots SF previously known as the Program Assistant or PA) and one Area Manager were selected from within two area offices under the regional offices in Rajshai and Nilfomari. These people were chosen randomly on the basis of their experience and were very effective sources of information on the ground level as these officials have the most direct contacts with the women members of the SF program. Also, among themselves, the AM, and the POs share more intimate managerial relationships as all of them work in the same area office.

From the grassroots level, five women participants were interviewed in detail. I interviewed three from the Rajshahi zone and two from the Nilfomari zone. These women were chosen randomly from the lists of members of the SF program that BRAC management prepares for each area office of its SF program. The women were of different ages from 20 to 37 years and worked in the contexts with different land ownership patterns. Thus, two women leased land from the local rich peasants through BRAC, two leased from the BRAC itself and one had her own land that she inherited from her father.

For the interviews in Bangladesh, I developed an interview guide (see Appendix A). The guide helped me to pose situation specific open-ended questions for interviewing the BRAC management people, the women participants, and the Chief of the Food Security Unit of EU in Bangladesh. The Chief of the Food Security Unit focused on the relationship between the EU's FSU and the BRAC on the matter of SF program and the latter's handling of the SF program. The Chief Advisor spoke mainly about his experiences dealing with the Bangladesh government and the foreign donors, mainly the European Union. The Sector Specialist spoke extensively about BRAC's notion of sustainable forestry and the overall philosophy and actions of the SF program. The middle managers described their managerial duties and responsibilities ranging from keeping contact with the head office to the frequent field visits to supervise the progress of the SF program. The lower level officials mainly focused on their experiences of women's participation in the program and the nature of contacts

they maintain at the grassroots level with the women. The women beneficiaries of the SF program talked about their opinions regarding the goals and objectives of the SF program, their relationships with the BRAC management, and their overall experiences with the SF program. The interviews lasted about thirty-five to forty five minutes on average with the exception of the Sector Specialist one that lasted about one and half hour. The interview guide, and the open-ended questionnaires were prepared in English and later translated into Bengali during the interviews.

In addition to the formal interviews, I spoke informally with a number of BRAC officials, mostly middle and lower level, the women participants, forestry officials at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council library (who are involved in many forestry programs of the government and other NGOs). I also had extensive conversations with a few rural peasants who have leased their land to BRAC for doing forestations. These informal conversations often proved to be very useful as many of them spoke freely about their opinion of BRAC as a development organization, its management structures and the feasibility of SF program in Bangladesh. Apart from the interviews, I made frequent visits to the BRAC library at the head office, and the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council library for documents on BRAC's social forestry program and other forestry programs in Bangladesh.

It was not easy to determine, at first, who to interview in the Long Beach Model Forest Society for the present study. The reason was, unlike BRAC, the LBMFS does not have a layered organizational structure with a clearly defined top, bottom, and low-level management. What it does have is a small unit of paid staff and a Partnership Board, an Administration Committee, Working Groups, Advisory Committee, Project Partners, and the Technical Advisors. Except for the staff, all the positions are voluntary and unpaid. Moreover, many members in the LBMFS organizational structure are present simultaneously in more than one division. Therefore, it was difficult to determine who were at the top of the management and who were not, as the LBMFS itself is not based on a clear division of labor. In the case of BRAC's SF program, again, the membership was clearly defined and only the rural women can be members of the program. But in LBMFS, membership is open to all sections of the society and I really did not know who to talk to at the grassroots level as I have talked to the women in BRAC case. However, things became much easier upon my first visit to the LBMFS's office in Ucluelet in the first phase of the LBMF program study. After having very intimate conversations with the Assistant General Manager, I developed a list of people to interview. The people who were available at that time included the AGM herself, the interim General Manager who was about to leave his position in September 1999, the Geographic Information System (GIS) Coordinator, the Rainforest Interpretive Center (RIC) Coordinator, the Program Coordinator of the LBMFS, and a former member of the LBMFS's Board of Directors who represented a First Nation forest company at the Board. The interim GM of the LBMFS eventually became the President of the Partnership Board or the Board of Directors by the time I made the second visit there in January-February, 2000. During his interview, he made it clear that the views he had then were definitely the views he wanted to uphold were he to become involved with the LBMFS

again in future. Except for the formal interview with the AGM, I had numerous informal meetings with her during both visits and she explained a lot of social and political things surrounding the organization. The Program Coordinator manages all the administrative meetings of the LBMFS and is an active participant in the events of the organization. The former member of the Board of Directors shed light on some very crucial political matters that he experienced during his tenure as a Board member and gave a few insightful thoughts on the improvement of a 'fragile' and 'vulnerable' organization like the LBMFS. As initiators of two of the most successful projects, the Coordinators of Rainforest Interpretive Center and Geographic Information System were definitely important people to interview to know about the current situations concerning the First Nation communities and these projects. Therefore, in terms of developing familiarity with the people and the organization, my first visit to Ucluelet was extremely useful.

A few changes occurred by the time I made the second trip to the LBMFS in January-February, 2000. The Coordinator of RIC had resigned following a bitter critique of RIC by a hired consultant in the fall of 1999 (the study was done by the consultant, Cindy Hazenboom, in Spring 1999) and the Center was closed for a while. The interim GM had become the President of the Board of Directors, and a new GM had been hired on a contract basis for one year. These changes helped me to select the people to interview in the second phase.

In the second phase of my fieldwork in the Long Beach Model Forest, I concentrated significantly on the people who have had experiences in dealing with the First Nations communities. I chose the directors of three different sectors or partners at the Board—the Members at Large, the Youth Sector, and the Mamook Development Corporation, a First Nation forest company. The selection of these three people was intentional because all of them have been involved with the LBMFS since its inception (previously they had served in the paid staff division in different positions) and all of them are First Nation people themselves. Therefore, they described their personal experiences as First Nations of dealing with the LBMFS and the overall participation of the First Nations in the program. The directors of the Ministry of Forests, BC and the federal government were obvious choices given the power of these two governments in the sustainable forestry initiatives in British Columbia. I also interviewed the newly appointed GM of the LBMFS. Although he had yet to understand the complexities of the organization, he had prior experience of dealing with First Nations as a professional forester and thus, gave important thoughts about the LBMFS overall and the participation of the First Nations in the program. The Program Coordinator of the Hydro riparian Project, the most successful research project cited by different observers, was interviewed. In fact, she gave me lot of information, cautiously though, about the functions and dysfunctions of the LBMFS during the later fieldwork.

Like the BRAC's Social Forestry program, I used an interview guide for the interviews in the LBMFS (see Appendix B). Based on that principally, I used an open-ended questionnaire to interview each of the thirteen individuals in the LBMFS. However, unlike the BRAC case the nature of the questions that were asked of each individual here almost the same and the questions focused mainly on the broad dimensions of goals and objectives, First Nations participation and

land tenure arrangements. The reason is pretty straightforward. In BRAC, the divisions of labor or the specialization functions are clearly defined and follow structured rules since BRAC demonstrates all the features of a large bureaucratic organization. Therefore, the questions were different for each level of management. In the case of LBMFS, there is no clear sense of hierarchy; because of the democratic nature of the broader society (at least on the surface level) and the nature of collaborative partnership of the LBMF program, each individual had clear opinions about the general goals, objectives, First Nations participation and the land jurisdictions. The average time for the interviews was the same here as in BRAC: except for the Assistant General Manager and the interim General Manager, the interview lasted from thirty five to forty five minutes. For the former, the interviews went for one and half-hours and one hour respectively. These two people covered not only the three dimensions but also some political and personal issues that affected the whole program between the periods 1997-99. The interviews were undertaken face-to-face, except for the telephone interviews with the director of the provincial government sector and the director of the 'members at large' sector. Besides these formal interviews, I had meetings with many people in Ucluelet and Tofino who once served in the organization before and were eager to express their opinions on the LBMF program.

Overall, I had almost the same experience in both Bangladesh and Canada doing the fieldwork. In some cases, the LBMFS fieldwork was easier to do compared to the Social Forestry of BRAC. For example, I was not allowed by the BRAC management to attend the monthly general meeting of the upper, middle and lower level managers of the SF program that is held every month at the head office in Dhaka. It would have been very useful to listen to what they talked about in this meeting and what decisions were taken. On the other hand, I had free access to the Administration Committee meeting of the LBMFS, and in the meeting I was introduced formally to the members and visitors. This helped to get to know the individuals who were involved in the LBMF program and later, almost all of them spoke freely to me about the organizations. For the BRAC's SF program, the interviewees from all levels were very cautious about what they were saying to me. However, both in the BRAC and the LBMFS cases, people said many important things 'off the record'. While an underlying fear, perhaps, constrained the BRAC officials during the interviews, some of the individuals in the LBMFS were also a little bit more cautious than other people about what they were saying. Also, time and resource constraints delimited the number of sites to be visited and the number of people to be interviewed in Bangladesh and Canada. Therefore, I could not visit the Chittagong Hill Tracts forestation program of BRAC that is being criticized by many for its neglect of local culture and traditional knowledge of trees. In Long Beach Model Forest Society, I did not interview individuals from all sections of its management structure. The people who were interviewed there hold positions in the staff, Board of Directors, and the Administration Committee. There were no analogous structural positions between BRAC and LBMFS and therefore, the interviews taken in BRAC and LBMFS may not match each other perfectly. Nor were the people from the dominant forest industries who are a major power in the forest resource management in the region

were interviewed. For some purposes these would be major limitations. However, the general objective of this study is *not* to make generalizations about NGO directed sustainable forestry programs in developing and developed worlds. Instead, the major objective is to describe three basic dimensions of these two programs in Bangladesh and Canada so ideas are gained about sustainable forestry programs in 'shared, disseminated, and investigated further' (Fraenkel and Wallen 1996:465).

CHAPTER 3

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee: Developing the Rural Bangladesh

Origin and Development

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee or BRAC was born in February 1972 during the post-liberation relief activities for the refugees in Bangladesh. It started small and simple. Taking with him some equally enthusiastic and dedicated people, the founder of BRAC, F.H. Abed (the present Executive Director of BRAC) went out to help thousands of refugees from India who came back to the Sulla of Sylhet district in the northeastern part of Bangladesh. Devastated by the war, they lost almost everything, including their homes, livestock, fishing boats and any other means of production (Lovell 1992, p. 23). Sulla was chosen purposefully by BRAC, as it was almost unreachable by the conventional relief organizations.[7]

After a year of operation in that area and when the situation was beginning to normalize, Abed and his colleagues started to think about a more sustainable, long term community development project rather than simple relief work. The relief work, they found, created a "*dependency syndrome*" (BRAC 1997a, p. 1) that eventually led to a "state of dependency" among the rural people (BRAC 1997b, p. 9). Therefore, in 1973, the relief work was replaced by a more community-based integrated development project "involving the rural communities as a whole" (BRAC 1997b, p. 9) that the BRAC authority thought of as an effective approach to improve the poor living conditions of the people in the targeted communities (Lovell 1992, p. 23). However, that also did not work as effectively as expected. Not surprisingly, BRAC again discovered that this program did not benefit the poor; rather it was the rural elite who hindered the resource flow to the poor and was able to exploit the dynamics of rural power structure to profit from the program (BRAC 1997b, p.9). In fact, it took BRAC researchers considerable time to find out and understand the dynamics of rural power structure that caused limited or no success in their first four years' programs that tried to mobilize the rural people collectively. Talking to villagers, analyzing the conditions under which the socio-economic and political spheres are formed in the rural areas, these researchers found three interrelated themes which inhibited a collective solidarity among all the people: a) *discontinuity*: in every village in Bangladesh one can find many factional groupings where the richer people form the leadership strata and the poorer people are subjugated by them within the strata with an assurance of economic assistance from the rich during times of distress. These rich people typically control all the resources in the village, and have strong benefit sharing relationships with the corrupt local

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[7] BRAC supplied the homeless people with the necessary bamboo to build houses, raw materials to make fishing nets were distributed among the fishing communities, along with important tools that would be used by the craftspeople. To prevent the outbreak of epidemics and other diseases, they also opened up health clinics in the area (Lovell 1992, p. 23).

government administration. These factional groupings have cooperative relationship *with* the faction members but endure and rear hatred, distrust and non-cooperation *between* the factions. This relational gap between factions is called the *discontinuity*; b) *dependency*: this problem stems from the first one. The marginal or landless farmers struggle to survive in a situation where all the resources (and again these are scarce) are controlled by the rich and distributed among the community members unevenly. All the year round, therefore, the poor people are dependent on the rich factional leaders for work and food. In other words, the factional groupings are the means of the rich people to perpetuate the dependent relationship of the poor. 3) *disadvantaged ness*: these two socio-political exploitative relations build the ground for a continuous process with the poor being disadvantaged and in favor of the wealthier families. Under this condition of *disadvantaged ness*, the poor lack political power to confront or change the situation; rather they continue to struggle for survival under the patronage of the rich ones (Lovell 1992, Pp. 28-31).[8]

In order to avoid the influence of the rural elite and to work with the most disadvantaged or the poorest section of the rural population, BRAC finally adopted a "target group" approach in 1976. Broadly, the *target group* consists of the people who live below the poverty line and may represent different working classes (for example, day laborers, fishermen without adequate tools or rights, petty trader etc.). More specifically now the target group is defined as:

> Those households that own less than 0.50 decimals of land, own no implements of production, and in which the principal worker has had to sell at lest 100 days of labor over the past year in order to subsist. Additionally, at least 50 percent of each village organization must be comprised of people who own *no* land (Lovell 1992, p. 33).[9]

Since the creation of the organization, therefore, BRAC has gone through some evolutionary stages and a process that has constantly modified and reshaped BRAC's objectives by a method of trial and error.[10] Currently, BRAC has developed into a massive organization operating in all the districts of Bangladesh and covering half of the total number of villages with its multi sectoral

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[8] For more discussions on factional groupings and dependency relationship in the rural areas of Bangladesh, see Chowdhury (1982).

[9] When BRAC decided to work with the "poorest" directly in the villages by-passing the rich section, it could not come to any instant definition of the "poorest", however. Again, it was a process of learning by trial and error. Considering all the landless, fishermen, and women as the eligible members of BRAC's Village Organization (VO), it called all of the above population "poorest." But soon, the organization had difficulty in delivering the social services (educational, management and skills training, and negotiation with the government agencies in the villages etc.) and technical services to the real hardcore poor. Then, it redefined the category to include "those households who sell their manual labor to others for survival, irrespective of occupation, provided they do not have political patrons among the non-target people, and provided they cannot still exercise status considerations" (Lovell 1992, p. 32).

[10] For a time line of BRAC projects since its inception in 1972, see BRAC (1997b).

programs.[11] Before we focus on BRAC's various development programs, we should know the development philosophy this organization believes in.[12]

BRAC's "Theory of Development": sustainability, empowerment, and gender

BRAC does not have any written theory of development. Rather, it has developed a model of rural development out of its own experiences and lessons learned from other development NGOs over the years and that model is guided by several principles that are to be followed strictly by all BRAC officials at the head office and local level. These principles are a combination of some educational, moral, ethical, social, and also commercial attitudes that defines BRAC's relationship to the rural poor and to a significant extent, to its own management.

One of the most important principles that BRAC is built on is its relentless effort to conscientize the rural poor, *conscientization* as understood and advocated by Paulo Friere. The term, "conscientization" in a Freireian sense refers to a group process. In his best known work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire argues "education is either for the domestication of people or the liberation of people". Conscientization aims at awakening a critical awareness of the social ills responsible for oppressive circumstances. As Freire says, "Conscientization cannot stop at the stage of revealing reality. It becomes authentic when we experience the revelation of the real world as dynamic and dialectical unity with the actual transformation of reality" (Freire 1985: 169). In other words, conscientization goes beyond mere consciousness raising and tries to transform the oppressive structures that the oppressed find themselves in (Rozario 1997). BRAC understands that the underlying cause of rural poverty is a fatalistic attitude of the rural poor and their incapacity to understand the real causes of their powerlessness and poverty. To help the poor understand by themselves the various social, economic, and political factors that actually subjugate them to their present situation, BRAC tries to instill a sense of awareness among its poor members so that they can, to put it simply, speak out against all forms of discrimination and exploitation.

A second guideline for BRAC's development activities, flowing from the emphasis on conscientization, is its theory of *people-centeredness*. It means that the organization does not want to be the patron of the village organization members. Rather it visions itself as one of the participants in the whole process where the rural poor *actively* and *spontaneously* participate with a framework of their own assessed needs. This idea of people-centeredness even encourages the rural people to participate in the broader political exercise so that they can develop the strength to hold the BRAC and the other government officials accountable to them for their actions.

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[11] The total number of villages in Bangladesh is believed to be 68,000 and total number of districts is 64. As of December 1997, BRAC, through different program intervention, has covered 37,740 villages and 337 sub-districts (*thana*) out of 460 sub-districts in all 64 districts of Bangladesh (BRAC 1997b).

[12] This section draws extensively on Lovell (1992, Pp. 24-28).

A third principle that navigates BRAC toward the developmental activities for the poor is their firm belief in the ability of the poor to develop themselves, given proper opportunities of course. In other words, BRAC gives technical and financial support to the poor in order to make them self-reliant. This feeling and confidence of self-reliance among the rural people will enable them to be independent of the wealthier, exploitative class in the rural areas. The BRAC extension officers are there and will continue to be there to provide any sort of technical, financial, and moral support to the members in the cases of possible opposition from the rural elite.[13]

A fourth principle that BRAC envisages to follow is the idea of *sustainable development*. This means less dependency on the donor fund that is only achievable by the creation of an effective network between the locally supported systems and broader national development network. However, this implies a change in the existing national policies and market systems, which is, as, BRAC understands, very difficult to achieve. What it wants its village level workers to do though is to play the role of *catalysts* in order to assist the government agencies to bring about the effective delivery of services for the rural people. Also, where the government sector lacks adequate resources to do the development activities, BRAC tries to cover the areas with its resources, if possible.

The fifth principle is how BRAC perceives the poverty situation in Bangladesh. According to BRAC, there is no *fix-all* approach to poverty alleviation as poverty is multifaceted; this is something more than just economic powerlessness. Therefore, providing rural people with off-farm jobs may be a good idea for their immediate economic strength but it is not sustainable. Rather, more important factors underlying poverty are lack of skill, technical knowledge and credit among the rural poor. In other words, BRAC stresses the human development aspect of the poverty alleviation scheme.

The sixth principle of BRAC is *going to scale*. This means, instead of being the role model of development, BRAC wants to reach as many poor people as possible in shortest period of time. BRAC wants to reach the rural poor and assist them with all the possible services they want because of the magnitude and dominant nature of poverty in Bangladesh.[14]

The seventh principle stresses the importance of a market perspective and an entrepreneurial spirit. It means that the services that BRAC provides to rural poor are not free, and may be subsidized at best. It is done to partially recover the

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[13] BRAC, however, does not see any dependency of the poor people on the BRAC field level workers that may build up after the prolonged and continued support from the latter. Rather, BRAC encourages this working relationship between the BRAC staff and the rural poor and hopes that an environment of togetherness will open up the opportunities for both parties to exercise their full potentials in the development process.

[14] One may ask about the risks that are involved in rapid scaling up of development activities. But BRAC has the answer: "Rapid and very large scale-up may not be appropriate for all NGOs, or for all countries, but in the Bangladesh context of huge population and overriding need, rapid scale-up is essential. Rapid scale-up always entails problems and risks, but the opportunity costs of not scaling up are too great for the rural poor to bear (Lovell 1992, p. 26).

operating cost of a huge organization like BRAC and also to build up a sense of self-reliance and business thinking in the minds of the rural people and the staff.[15]

The last but not least guiding principle that BRAC believes in is the *importance of women* in the development activities in Bangladesh. BRAC understands that in a broader social framework. It is recognized that especially in rural areas, women are always neglected, unheard, and uncared for by their own families and society. They lack any social or political power to mobilize themselves, have few or no rights, and have hardly any opportunity to change their lives. They are, in other words, trapped in a situation of subjugation and powerlessness by the broader society that only perpetuates the cycle of their impoverishment. BRAC's understanding of the importance of women in primary health care, nutrition, and family planning originates from its own experiences and experiences from the other NGOs. Now, BRAC religiously focuses on women and makes them the center of its development activities.[16] Its aim is to introduce the women to the income generating activities that "would not only provide short-term gains but would also introduce them to a mechanism to progressively and sustainably improve their lives" (BRAC 1997b, p. 16):

> When they become VO members, poor rural women not only gain access to credit but other services as well. Immediately after becoming members they become part of a Life Insurance Plan and have different options to save with BRAC. They receive a free health check-up service once a year and can also take a housing loan. BRAC provides them technical and input support for their income generating activities and run classes on legal and social issues. (BRAC 1997, p. 19).

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[15] In fact, this entrepreneurial spirit of BRAC is reflected in its internal operations and its external relations with other agencies who request different services from them. BRAC's staff are taught and encouraged to generate the expenses on their own by charging for services of the respective office (computer division, training center etc.). BRAC makes a profit when it gives training to other NGOs and people. Also, BRAC has always organized intervention services to rural people such that they can make at least enough profit to run the organization and the services. The creation of many commercial enterprises (BRAC printers, BRAC dairy, Aarong or handicrafts store etc.) at home and abroad has become a potential source of income for BRAC. These various commercial projects contributed about 17% of the total income in the year 1997 (BRAC 1997b, p. 54).

[16] BRAC can justifiably be called a 'women's organization'. Initially, separate Village Organizations (VO) were made for both men and women (however, no male VO was created before the establishment a female VO in the area), BRAC now only forms VO for women. Currently, 95% of its VO members are women. In organizational management as well, BRAC is trying to increase the number of female staff. This is mainly because the overwhelming majority of women in VOs should be approached by women field level workers, in conformity with the social and religious customs of Bangladesh confirm. Currently, BRAC has 5,386 full-time female staff working in the head office (173) and field offices (5,213) and 29,807 part-time female staff working in the field offices. There is also an increase of female staff in BRAC's top management. Whereas there was only one woman director in the whole management in the early 90s (Lovell, 1992, p. 122), there are now four women sitting in different top level positions (including as the directors of Non-formal Primary Education Program and Health and Population Division) (BRAC 1997b).

The basic philosophy of BRAC's development theory is to achieve sustainability of its programs at all levels: *institutionally, environmentally, and socially*. The primary factor that will help achieving sustainability, BRAC firmly believes, is 'people's participation'. The Executive Director of BRAC explained the difference between BRAC's development management philosophy and the philosophy of other types of "management:"

> Development, quintessentially, is action by people. It is something that the people themselves do, or its does not take place at all. Capital, physical resources and infrastructure are obviously necessary for development, but these are secondary. The predominant factor is the people. This is particularly true for rural development. Rural development is basically an issue of individual and societal change—change in the attitudes, values, skills, perceptions, institutions and ways of life of the rural poor. These changes are complex and time consuming. To expedite this change through action by the people we need what we call an "enabling environment." *Such an environment enables the people to participate in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of their own actions*. Creating this enabling environment is the responsibility of a development manager. His/her prime concern is how to elicit and ensure participation. Commercial management, on the other hand, has somewhat a different role…Development is a complicated job, and its management is much more complex than is usually conceived. Rural development is no longer a job for an amateur. (Abed, cited in Lovell 1992, p. 120 italics added).

Overall, BRAC promotes a *humanized* approach where its development workers will not only work for the poor but also work with them, understand their values and needs and work with a commitment to improve their lives. This particular commitment or value should "supersede an individual's desire for money" (Lovell 1992, p. 120) and be transmitted to all levels of management so that all the workers can find some "larger" cause in the development projects. Devotedly practiced, then, this moral and ethical commitment of BRAC management should ideally lead to active and spontaneous participation of the rural poor in the process of project decision-making and implementation. Therefore, a combined package—re-distributive justice fostered by egalitarian ethics, human resource development and incorporation of diverse and useful knowledge and interests of the disadvantaged people—serves as the core of BRAC's development ethics. BRAC sets two goals as core elements of its development strategy—poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor. According to BRAC, these elements are "inseparable and mutually reinforcing aspects of BRAC's strategy" (BRAC 1993, cited in Khandker and Khalily 1996, p. 11). These goals can be achieved with concerted effort beginning from "targeting the households and forming organizations, improving social awareness,

and enhancing income and productivity by providing credit, social education, and skill development training" (Khandker and Khalily 1996, p. 11).[17]

To realize the goals of poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor, BRAC has launched a diverse range of development programs supported, to some extent, by commercial projects. Among the development programs, the cores are Rural Development Program (RDP), Non-Formal Primary Education and the Health and Population Division. Among the support programs there are mainly training and monitoring services. In fact, each of BRAC's development programs has ramified into several branches of development activities in the areas of credit, rural enterprise, income generation for the poor women, adult literacy, reproductive health and disease control, to name a few.[18]

To carry out the diversified activities, BRAC uses a management structure that emphasizes a decentralized "flat" and an "organic" structure based on "self-coordination" among the different layers of management. As the most important of the features of this organization, it is worth to have a quick look at the organizational structure of BRAC.

Organizational Structure of BRAC: 'flat' and 'flexible'[19]

According to the inside and outside evaluations, BRAC's management structure is amazingly flat considering the number of intermediate levels of management (Lovell 1992; Khandker and Khalily 1996; BRAC 1997b). BRAC is a three-tier organization: the head office in Dhaka is the top management and the field level offices are the bottom level management while the regional offices mediate between these two as the intermediate level. Thanks to the dynamic leadership of its Executive Director, Mr. F.H. Abed, BRAC's management

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[17] Whatever the program is, mobilization of the target households is the first step of BRAC's operational model. The process begins with 'identifying' target people. The Program Organizers (PO, the grassroots level extension workers) then motivate them to form solidarity groups or cohesive groups of five to seven members in each group. Then a village organization is formed of forty-five to fifty-five solidarity group members. For each solidarity group, there is one secretary general (SG) elected for two years. Seven to ten SGs from the solidarity groups then govern the managing committee of the village organization. A VO managing committee reviews loan applications, monitor credit behavior of its members and supervise other non-economic services. Once the VO is formed in any area (generally, each village under BRAC operation has two VOs, one for women and one, depending on the nature of the program, for men), BRAC comes forward with its direct and indirect intervention programs to develop the members, socially and economically. Direct interventions provide functional education through literacy programs and social awareness education (it is taught in the form of some 'decisions' that actually underscore the necessity of health, nutrition, and education for the members and to by understand and practice rigorously by the members), skill development training (TARC is BRAC's training center where the members of the VO and the BRAC staff are given short term training on different issues) and small credit for diverse business activities. The indirect interventions include providing primary education for the children of the women members and strict monitoring of behavior of the members in accordance with the 'decisions.' For a detail description of the formation, structure, and function of the VO and the solidarity groups, see (Lovell 1992; Khandker and Khalily 1996).

[18] For an extensive analysis of these programs, see Lovell (1992). For the RDP and RCP (Rural Credit Program) programs, see Khandker and Khalily (1996). For a brief but informative discussion of all the development programs see BRAC (1997b).

[19] This section draws extensively on Lovell (1992).

mandates have been to encourage and enable staff participation in all levels of decision making, ensure accountability from top to bottom, minimize traditional hierarchy, optimize the coordination and feedback opportunities and guarantee flexibility (Lovell 1992).

Initially, BRAC started with the head office controlling the activities of its branches. As the organization grew over time, it became necessary to decentralize the administrative system for efficient service delivery.[20] Khandker and Khalily call this process of decentralization "natural" rather than "deliberate" (1996: 52). With decentralization, it became possible for the intermediate and the bottom level management to increasingly take decisions without depending on the top management for their decisions on the matter. Now, both the regional manager and the area manager are in a position to decide, design, and implement a project in the field, but only after extensive conversation with the villagers about the plan.

Together with this "organic" flexibility that BRAC allows its managers to practice, there are certain areas where a strict "mechanistic" approach is followed. Thus, for example, the managers are well aware of the control and authority they must exercise regarding credit allocation, client targeting, financial transactions, work ethics, logistics etc. (Lovell 1992). These mechanistic elements are there to ensure "cohesion and structure in the face of complexity" (Lovell 1992: 126).

BRAC maintains rigorous feedback and coordination processes among its various organizational levels. Frequent meetings of the Program Organizers (POs, both the grassroots and the Social Forestry) with the villagers several times a week, visits by the top management people from the head office to see directly the situation in the field, and the routine meetings between the POs, Area managers (AM), and the Regional managers (RM) form the basis of information and responsibility sharing in BRAC's management.

The regional managers meet the area managers ten or twelve times a month to share the views on different strategies, problems that the villagers and the staff face at the field level. Then, the regional managers meet the head office management to discuss the problems that they talked about in the meetings with the Area Managers. The head office management tries to come up with possible solutions to these problems and decide on the future steps. To guarantee efficiency and transparency, informal feedback takes place when the Program Organizers, Regional Managers, or the Area Managers come to see the Executive Director or other top officer in the head office to talk about a problem that has shown up suddenly. Even the villagers, in groups or individually, can see the Executive Director (ED) or other officer at the head office when situation arises. [21]

The trainers from different TARC also meet informally the area and the regional managers to discuss the issues that they experience at the TARCs. This

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[20] Since its creation, a lot has been changed regarding decentralizing BRAC's management indeed. Presently, of its 20,000 full time staff, only 3% work in the head office in Dhaka whereas the rest are situated in numerous regional and area offices at the village level to supervise the activities of more than 2 million VO members. For more detail on the gradual process of BRAC's decentralization, see Lovell (1992), Khandker and Khalily (1996).

[21] The ED has made it obligatory for himself and for other officials at the head office to see and listen to all the people, including the villagers and the staff, who will come from different area offices and villages.

continuous ebb and flow of information, between the different levels of management guarantees, according to BRAC, "gives real meaning to the words like accountability and transparency" (BRAC 1997b).

As part of a formal feedback process, BRAC's Monitoring Department and Research and Evaluation Division constantly check the information gathered from the field, analyze it and then pass on the results to the management.[22] This comprehensive process of monitoring and evaluation helps to form the platform for learning and innovation, both for the top management and the area office management, and leads to the process of decentralized decisions and policy making (Khandker and Khalily 1996; 54).

The main basis on which the functioning of the whole organization depends is, according to Lovell (1992), the "self-coordination" process between BRAC's different management levels engaged in different programs. Overhead coordination mechanisms are sometimes necessary but only rarely.[23] Self-coordination, on the other hand, is more desirable by the program managers of BRAC because it gives them the freedom to decide separately on the problems of each small unit they work in and at the same time enables them to achieve the shared values and implement strategies that lead them to achieve the " long-term goal of advancing the status of villagers" (Lovell 1992: 132).

The ultimate authority rests with the nine-member general body. Seven of these nine members are elected to the governing body and the governing body appoints the Executive Director. However, BRAC's founder F.H. Abed serves as the founding executive director while there are two deputy executive directors who are elected. Like the other big NGOs in Bangladesh, BRAC is registered under the Societies Regulation Act and the Foreign Donations Act of the Government of Bangladesh.

BRAC-GOB Relations

BRAC started its operations in 1972 in the aftermath of the independence war of Bangladesh. The whole country was in disarray and chaos. The national government was formed but it was too immature to start its function due to infrastructural damages. With all the services to the war victims, gradually BRAC started to develop a good relationship with the government in the post-war rehabilitation sector.

During the post-war restoration period, BRAC's small but significant economic and physical supplies helped the Bangladesh government to tackle the refugee situation at least in one corner of Bangladesh. After that period, as is mentioned earlier, BRAC expanded rapidly and efficiently.

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[22] The program organizer deployed by the Managing Director in each region does monitoring at the field level. The task of this PO is to gather information on the thirty indicators that's been developed in consultation with the field workers and villagers. These indicators include organizational, social and health issues and weighted to measure the success of the VOs.

[23] The overhead coordination process allows for several decision makers who adapt to one another but on predetermined instructions coming from a central decision maker. For the overhead coordination process to occur, a multi layered organizational structure is needed, Lovell believes. BRAC's organizational structure is not that complex, rather it is flat although hierarchical.

As a member of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), BRAC is to abide by the code of ethics set by ADAB, which clearly defines the relationships with the state, beneficiaries (the grassroots people who it is working with), and the donors. The code of ethics is a self-regulatory behavioral process that any member NGO of ADAB must practice. The code, named "Declaration Regarding Definition, Statement of Purpose and Code of Ethics," first defines the member NGOs as "non-profit organizations committed to the development of the underprivileged and underserved" (Karim 1996: 134). The NGOs are renamed as Private Voluntary Development Organizations (PVDO) to differentiate from other numerous private organizations working in Bangladesh.[24] The purpose of the PVDO is to raise the living standard of the poor people in Bangladesh, and make them politically strong enough to express their voices in the local and national politics. In doing so, the PVDOs can generate funds on its own, take grants from the Government of Bangladesh and other external sources. It has been made imperative for these organizations to be accountable and transparent to the GOB and the "to the people" (Karim 1996: 135). At the same time, in their development effort, the PVDOs will form networks among themselves to eliminate ambiguity, factionalism, and enhance cooperation and professionalism.

BRAC is the largest NGO in Bangladesh and plays an important role in defining its relationship with the GOB. Since its inception, BRAC has shown enormous success in relief distribution during and after any natural disaster strikes Bangladesh, in family planning and health sectors, in primary education sector. As a result, it was able to attract government cooperation in these sectors. In fact, now BRAC acts as a partner of GOB in disaster relief, family planning, health and education sectors. However, BRAC-GOB relations were never constant; rather they fluctuated at different times for different reasons.

BRAC, like any other NGOs operating with foreign funds, maintains direct links with the government through NGO Affairs Bureau (NAB). The Government of Bangladesh established this office in 1990 with a view to control the receiving and spending of foreign funds by the NGOs. Previously the whole process of applying for foreign funds with a proposal by BRAC and other NGOs took a long time to be approved by the respective ministries of GOB.[25] Currently to ease the

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[24] According to ADAB, its member organizations should not be confused with NGOs on two grounds: a) there are many kinds of organizations in Bangladesh which are non-government in nature and engaged in different tasks ranging from recreation clubs for certain people to commercial enterprises for profit-making. PVDOs, on the other hand, are strictly confined to the services provided to the rural poor; b) PVDOs are a part of the private sector but represent the non-profit ones. These are not for any personal financial gains although initially set up by certain individuals (ADAB 1994, cited in Holloway 1998).

[25] For example, first BRAC would apply to the NAB with a written letter accompanied by the detail budget of expenses and the intent of the foreign donor. This letter was then to be sent to the related ministries for approval: health related development programs to the Ministry of Health, rural development proposals to the Ministry of Agriculture and so on and so forth. This took lot of time and many meetings between the government ministries and the NGO officials. The upper management of the NGOs remained too busy to keep good contact with the ministries (Lovell 1992: 160). However, even after that time consuming process, BRAC did not have many problems

process, the NAB works directly under the Prime Minister's office and gives certain rules and regulations to be followed by the applying NGOs.[26] Except for one major confrontation with the government in 1992, BRAC usually does not have any problem working with the NAB.[27]

BRAC-Donor Relations

BRAC is dependent on foreign donor agencies for financial and technical support for its various development programs. When it started as a relief and rehabilitation organization in 1972, it received financial and technical assistance from northern donors like OXFAM. The situation has changed greatly since then. Some donors have dropped out; some new ones have entered in the donor list of BRAC. Presently, a group of fourteen donors contribute to the total expenses incurred by BRAC's different programs.[28] BRAC does not borrow money from the commercial banks in Bangladesh (e.g. Bangladesh Bank etc.) and the foreign donations are mostly given in the forms of grants.

BRAC is constantly trying to decrease donor dependency for funds. Although it is very difficult for any development organization that is engaged in

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in getting its project proposals approved by the ministries because of its already established success in delivering health and education services to the rural poor.

[26] According to existing laws, any NGO that intends to work with the foreign funds must be registered either with the Ministry of Social Welfare under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance of 1967, or as a joint stock company by the Ministry of Commerce under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 or the Companies Act of 1913. NGOs with foreign funds must register with NAB first which is possible only if that NGO operates under the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Ordinance of 1978 and the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Ordinance of 1982. All these rules and laws convey a sense of strong government control over NGO activities since the NAB determines not only project to be undertaken but the amount of money that should be received from the donors (Karim 1996).

[27] Critiques of NGOs in Bangladesh are a regular phenomenon. In general, the NGOs are criticized for their lavish operational costs, luxurious office buildings and offices and for squandering of foreign aid for personal gain. As far as the GOB is concerned, nothing happened until the months of July-August in 1992 when NAB issued a letter to the ADAB canceling its (meaning all the members of ADAB) operations. The accusations of NAB ranged from political to economic to personal: NGOs are 'anti-state and dangerous,' 'anti-Islamic,' and do not obey the rules and regulations of NAB. Fingers were pointed to the luxurious four-wheel drive vehicles possessed by the big NGOs and consequently the NGOs were accused of being spending too much money on personal comfort rather than in rural development. Some sections of the press and media also attacked the NGOs for being agents of imperial powers to spread Christianity in rural areas of Bangladesh. The cancellation letter that NAB sent to ADAB on August 20, 1992 was withdrawn directly from the Prime Minister's office by another letter that freed the NGOs of all these accusations. Although the situation since then has never been normal, there has been no such case of direct confrontation between ADAB and NAB since then. For details on 1992 NAB-ADAB conflict, see Hashemi (1996), Karim (1996) and Holloway (1998).

[28] Among the major donors, Department for International Development of UK (DFID), European Economic Community (EEC), Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation (NOVIB), KFW of Germany, DGIS of Netherlands, Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), and Ford Foundation contributed more than 85 percent of total foreign donations during 1997.

massive rural development programs to be completely self-reliant, BRAC has been successful in minimizing donor dependency and generating income from its own internal sources. As a result, whereas in 1985, donors contributed about 85 percent of BRAC's total budget, they accounted for only 39 percent of total expenses in 1999 with the rest (61 percent) is generated from BRAC's commercial enterprises and its Rural Credit Program (personal communication with the Chief Advisor to BRAC, 1999).[29]

BRAC's donor group has their representation in Dhaka which maintains liaison between the donor group and the aid recipient BRAC. As a convention, BRAC management meets the donor representative twice a year to discuss matters of concern and common interests and to evaluate the progress of the development programs for which the donors have given funds. According to BRAC, the 'experts' sent by the donors to monitor BRAC's programs are very knowledgeable and experienced in development activities. Therefore, BRAC usually does not have any difficulty to explain the matters to them. Overall, the relationships with the donors are, according to BRAC, " absolutely excellent" (Chief Advisor to BRAC, 1999).

BRAC's Social Forestry Program: Food, Environment, and Sustainability

Since its inception in 1972, BRAC has grown into the largest NGO in Bangladesh with multisectoral rural development programs. Its major development programs are: the Rural Development Program, the Non-formal Primary Education Program, the Health Program and the Rural Credit Program. Social Forestry is a part of RDP and envisages empowering of the poor rural women like BRAC's any other programs.

The Social Forestry (SF) program of BRAC started as early as 1977 with a massive 'homestead plantation' program. Currently, the Social Forestry program has taken manifold shapes and has grown into a big SF program composed of several components. Before going into the goals and objectives of the SF program, its components are discussed very briefly as follows.

a) *Homestead Plantation:* it started in 1977. Under this program, initially BRAC bought the seedlings of fruit and fuel wood trees from government nurseries

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[29] These commercial enterprises are Aarong (or handicrafts shop), Dairy Project, BRAC Printers, and Cold Storage. Considerable amount of money is collected in the form of rent for the offices that BRAC has rented out of its twenty-storied head office building. Also, BRAC INN, a posh restaurant mostly for the foreign visitors and the rich located on the 8th floor in BRAC's head office, is run by professional business group who gets twelve percent of its profit and the rest goes to BRAC.

BRAC's Rural Credit Program was launched in 1989 with a vision to develop the organization as a sustainable long-term one. All BRAC VO members are required to save US 25 cent once every two weeks into savings account. Also, when they borrow money from the RCP, they have to deposit 5 percent of the money borrowed as a savings. BRAC gives 6 percent interest for saving account. Over the years, BRAC's RCP has grown to be one of the largest in the whole world with more than US 38 million dollars in members' savings and 469 million dollars as loans disbursed (BRAC 1997b).

and the Forest Department and supplied them to the poor people (usually the members of BRAC's Village Organization). The principle objective of this program is to promote afforestation.

b) *Roadside Plantation:* it was launched in 1980. The purpose of this program is to encourage the beneficiaries to plant trees on roadsides, school premises, pond banks and other public areas. The land is leased from the local administrative authorities (called *thana*, *union* in Bengali) on a renewable basis and leased out to the beneficiaries. The seedlings of trees, again, used to be collected from the government Forest Department. The trees that were encouraged by BRAC to be planted were mainly mulberry and Ipil-ipil. The aim was to engage the rural women in sericulture programs in collaboration with the Bangladesh Sericulture Board.[30]

c) *Nurseries:* with inadequate supplies from the government and the Forest Department nurseries, BRAC decided to set up its own nurseries in 1988. Now, the nurseries are divided into two types: forest-fruit and the grafting nursery. The nursery program focuses predominantly on poor women and tries to incorporate the rural women in the mainstream labor force to give them access to income generating activities. [31]

d) *Agroforestry and Block Plantations:* With the European Union's Food Security Unit's financial assistance, BRAC launched these two programs in 1997. Agroforestry and block plantations both have socio-economic and environmental potentials for rural women. The objectives are to supply the rural poor with the nutritional food and also produce fuelwood for their own consumption and for the market. By the end 1997, almost 300,000 trees were planted under agroforestry and a little more than that were planted under block plantations by a total number of 1909 farmers. Since then, the program is gradually expanded with now, as of February 1999, 12,823 new farmers being involved in the agroforestry and block plantation programs. Over 9000 farmers created plantations on their own land and the rest on the leased land (BRAC Progress Report 1999).[32]

Goals and Objectives: Food Security and Environmental Improvement

BRAC, like some other NGOs in Bangladesh, became concerned with the issue of environmental degradation and desertification in many parts of Bangladesh. BRAC's SF program, although all the components did not begin

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[30] However, BRAC's sericulture program is no longer considered a part of the Social Forestry program. Rather, it has become a big enterprise that engages the rural women who are trained as mulberry sapling growers and silkworm rearers. By the end of 1997, the latter numbered 21,000. Sericulture has become an additional source of income for these rural women (BRAC 1997b).

[31] By the end of 1997, BRAC had established 3606 forest-fruit nurseries and 276 grafting nurseries and had produced and distributed 32 million seedlings (BRAC 1997b).

[32] BRAC experimented with its first homestead agroforestry as a pilot project in district of Bangladesh in 1988. With the technical assistance from Winrock International, the objective of this pilot project was to find out the feasibility of agroforestry among the rural poor in Bangladesh. The findings were positive in terms of productivity, and profitability. It also indicated that the women are more keen about growing trees in homestead areas than the men and women played a key role in that agroforestry project (Rahman, Sanzidur 1989).

simultaneously, is an answer to resolve these problems. The major focus of SF programs in Bangladesh undertaken by the NGOs has been bringing the 'forest to the people' through the participation of the rural people in the afforestation activities where the objective is to raise the consciousness among the people through 'development education' (Rahman 1994, p.8). However, as a rural development organization, BRAC's overwhelming emphasis is on the poverty alleviation of the rural people. In the definition of 'social forestry' of BRAC, there is a combined concern for the socio-economic and environmental aspects that are to be considered by the organization:

> The definition of 'social forestry' is critical. BRAC uses this term broadly because it is concerned with the ecological and socio-economic outcome that can be achieved through social forestry. Ecological outcome here refers to increased number of trees, more biomass production, and beneficial ecological effects. By socio-economic outcome, BRAC assumes improvement in the rural living standard via increased availability of tree products both for home consumption and commercial sale, and by increasing access and control of physical, intellectual and political resources by the landless. Keeping this in mind, *social forestry is where tree production is undertaken by rural people on their own initiative and in an organized way* (Rahman, San 1989:3, italics mine).

The above definition underscores the importance of the consciousness raising aspect in social forestry. In fact, BRAC's afforestation activities are a part of EU's Food Security Program as stated earlier. Therefore, quite obviously the principal objective of BRAC's SF program is to alleviate rural poverty through creating employment for the rural women or poor people. If it can be done, BRAC hopes, it will automatically lead to increased environmental improvement because with increased food security there will be less pressure on the forest resources. Less pressure means more trees for longer period of time that should contribute to restoring ecological balance and reducing soil-erosion, landslides and mineral leaching. These specific objectives are broken down into several components that can be fit into three major categories that can be called 'Food, Environment and Sustainability.'[33] The food security and the environmental aspects of the SF

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[33] The indicators used for each category are slightly modified from BRAC Annual Work Plan (1998).

[34] The Sector Specialist of BRAC's SF programs describes his notion of sustainable forestry:

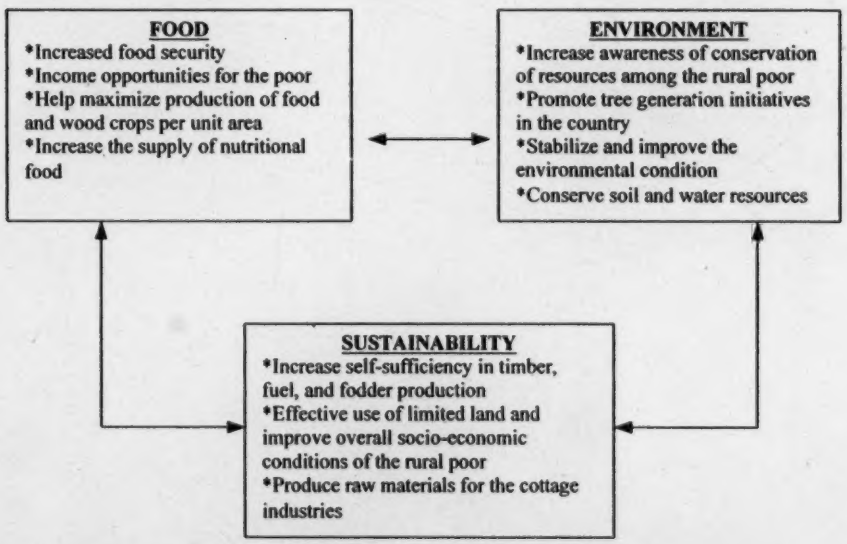
> By sustainable forestry I mean a program that will ensure that the trees that are planted will survive and will be useful to many people. How to achieve sustainability? Through active participation of the people, of course. If that occurs, the participating people will take care of the trees and will protect them. However, to achieve active participation of the people, there should be financial and economic benefits for them coming from the forestry program. The trees must generate income for them. People have to be able to use trees as fuelwood, fodder, and timber for their personal consumption and for sale. If the trees are protected and are taken care of, then the people should be able to

program will reinforce each other and will eventually, as BRAC believes, will lead to sustainable forestry (see Figure 1).[34]

To achieve the goals and objectives in the SF program, BRAC ensures the implementation of several rules and techniques.[35] In order to be involved in any of BRAC's programs, a woman has to first enroll herself in BRAC's Village Organization (VO). As soon as she becomes a member of VO, she becomes a part of BRAC's institutional framework and she has to adhere to group norms and discipline. What she achieves by doing that is access to the technical and financial network that BRAC works in. This access, which is very important both for the program and herself may take the form of technology transfer, SF training by the TARC, and BRAC's credit program.

The institutional framework soon results in manifold linkages between the members of the VO and also with other public sector organizations and programs. As a part of the SF program, the member learns to develop linkages with the government Forest Department, Department of Land Revenue, and Sericulture Board etc. With increased interaction between the member and these organizations, the woman member becomes less and less dependent on BRAC's staff.

Figure 1. Tripartite relationships of different goals and objectives of BRAC's SF program.


FOOD
*Increased food security
*Income opportunities for the poor
*Help maximize production of food and wood crops per unit area
*Increase the supply of nutritional food
ENVIRONMENT
*Increase awareness of conservation of resources among the rural poor
*Promote tree generation initiatives in the country
*Stabilize and improve the environmental condition
*Conserve soil and water resources
SUSTAINABILITY
*Increase self-sufficiency in timber, fuel, and fodder production
*Effective use of limited land and improve overall socio-economic conditions of the rural poor
*Produce raw materials for the cottage industries

use tree branches, twigs, leaves etc. as fuelwood and enjoy the benefits from the second or third year of the tree plantation. In other words, sustainable forestry could be achieved through a viable and acceptable forestry program from which the participants will be able to enjoy benefits (economic, and social) for a long time (Interview with the Sector Specialist).

[35] This part draws mainly on Haq and Alim (1995).

The beneficiaries or the women members of the SF program buy high yielding variety (HYV) seeds, and fertilizer either from BRAC or the local market. However, BRAC continues to give free training to those who participate in the program, as well as follow-up technical service, and innovative new ideas to improve the program and tree plantation. When the agroforestry and the block plantation started in 1997, BRAC proposed to the donor (European Union) that the participants should be given some financial incentives for the first year. Because it takes a while to get direct return from the program (through vegetable plantation) and the participants are too poor to wait that long without any financial benefit, the participants were given an amount of CDN $14 per month or $168 annually as wage money.[36] BRAC hopes that after a year of financial assistance the women will be able to take care of the plantations on their own with BRAC's supervision and follow-ups.

Participation of Women Members: Few will Participate

As we have noticed in BRAC's development philosophy, participation of BRAC members is considered the most important factor in any of its development programs. Likewise, in SF program BRAC preaches active participation of its women beneficiaries in the planning, implementation, and management of the SF program. The entire process in which the participation of poor rural women takes place entails a few steps that are strictly organized by the BRAC officials.

In order to be a beneficiary of the SF program, a woman has to be a member of BRAC's Village Organization and possess no more than .5 decimal of land. After this VO membership is ensured, the process of "*selection*" begins. Participation is ensured through a filtering process. There are, usually, forty or forty-five members in a Village Organization. But BRAC needs only *ten*. In a regular weekly meeting, the purpose and usefulness of the SF program is thoroughly explained by the BRAC field level workers known as the Program Organizers (previously called Program Assistants).[37] Listening to the rules and conditions of the SF program twenty members may decide not to take part in the SF program. So, twenty members are left who are interested in joining the program. However, their interest means little if they do not meet the criteria set by BRAC. The criteria BRAC uses are:

- Site of the program and the proximity of the member's house to the site: BRAC prefers those members to be involved in the SF program in any area whose housed are located nearest to the SF site. This is because women in rural Bangladesh will not be able to go too far take care of trees when they

[36] This payment is, however, conditional. If a member is to get this money every month from BRAC, she has to demonstrate a very good ability to plant and protect trees. This wage is paid only if more than 80 percent of the plants survive the initial hazards (cattle grazing, irrigation, use of fertilizer etc., BRAC Progress Report 1999).

[37] These POs maintain direct relationships with the women beneficiaries at the grassroots level. POs are usually high school or college graduates who are given special training on social forestry at TARC.

have to take care of the household chores as well. So, close proximity between the beneficiary's house and the tree plantation site is important since trees, after they are planted, need regular follow-up by the beneficiary.

- Amount of time a member will be able to spend taking care of the trees: BRAC views this as an important criteria since tree planting and rearing need lot of time and labor. For this reason, if a member of VO is already engaged in any other income generating activities of BRAC, she cannot be a participant in SF or any other afforestation activities undertaken by BRAC.
- Physical ability of the member: BRAC regards this criteria as the most crucial since trees take quite a long time to grow and during first few years trees need constant nurturing. Therefore, beneficiary's physical ability to cope with this long-term project is very important.

After the selection of the members of VO who qualify to be the beneficiaries of SF program, BRAC gives them technical and financial back-up service to continue with the program. Then comes the issue of tree species selection. BRAC considers two important factors regarding the tree species: soil types of the area where the trees are to be planted and the social preferences, that is to say, the choice of the participating women. Thus, according to the Regional Sector Specialist of Social Forestry (Head Office):

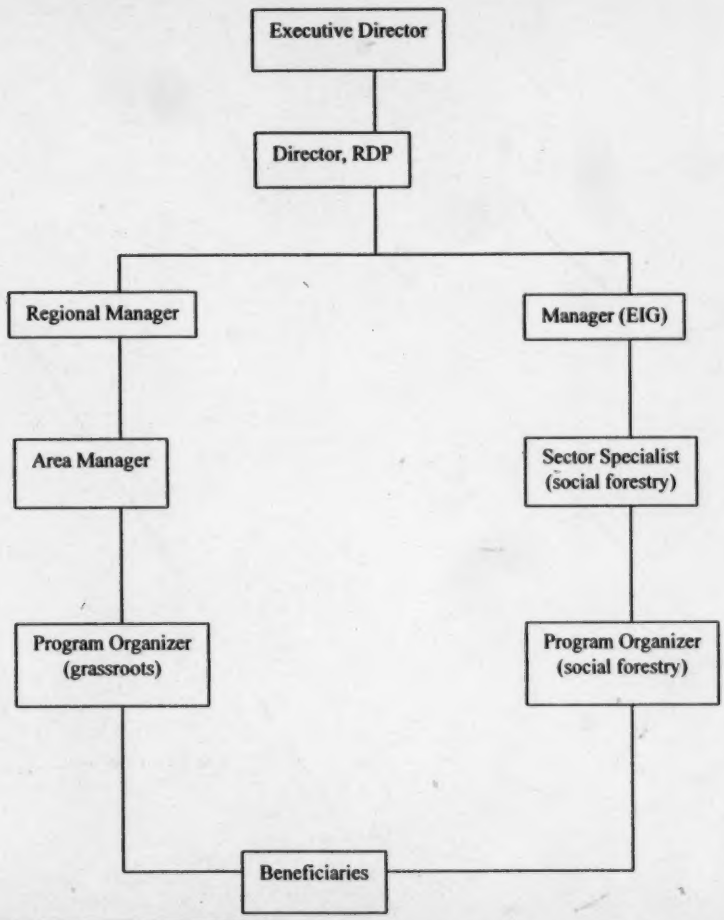
> We always want to adhere to the demands of the local people as far as species selection is concerned. We review the soil types and the long-term practice of the local people in a particular area where we have launched the SF program. If we do something opposite and try to impose something foreign on them, the participants will lose interest in taking care of the trees. Ultimately, as a result, our SF program will fail and with it will die our goal to improve the socio-economic conditions of the participants through the SF program. (Interview with the RSS, 1999)

The trees that are usually grown in nurseries, homestead plantations, roadside plantations, agroforestry and block plantations are those that will quickly grow and be capable of generating fast cash return for the beneficiaries. Among the tree species, there are four major categories—fuel wood and timber, fruit bearing plants, fodder/forage and vegetables/spices. Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*), Sissoo (*Dalbergia Sissoo*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) etc. are recommended by BRAC more than other trees. The fruit bearing trees are banana, guava, jackfruit, lemon, mango, pineapple, and Ipil-ipil, Sugarcane comprises the fodder/forage category mostly. For agroforestry plantations, BRAC encourages different types of vegetable plants including potatoes, raddishes, cucumbers, eggplants etc. (Khan 1992).

Participation of the beneficiaries starts at the moment the SF program commences in any area. First they are given 2 to 5 days of training in how to plant and take care of the plants. Figure 2 helps us to understand the reciprocity between the women members of the Village Organizations and the BRAC officials. The training is conducted by the Program Organizers (social forestry) and Program

Organizers (grassroots) who have direct link with the beneficiaries.[38] After the training, the beneficiaries prepare the land with fertilizer, build fences, and dig pits according to the planting modules suggested by BRAC. The next stage is the beginning of a long and rigorous management process that is "mainly concentrated in the field" (BRAC Progress Report 1999, p.3). The POs (both sector and the grassroots level) hold extensive weekly meetings with the participants. Participants, however, have to make frequent visits to BRAC Area Offices to receive different inputs (monthly wage etc.) and also for maintaining other regular linkages with BRAC.

Figure 2. The management structure of BRAC's social forestry program



[38] The grassroots level workers of BRAC were previously known as the Program Assistants; that changed in July 1998. Now they are called Program Organizer, the front line liaison between the beneficiaries and BRAC. However, after this change in designation is made, some POs continue to be the front line staff as they were before as Program Assistant and other POs in their previous capacity of supervisory activities in different sector—forestry, livestock, essential health care, sericulture, fisheries, agriculture etc. (BRAC Annual Work Plan 1998).

Reproduced, with modifications, from BRAC (1997a)

Whatever is discussed between the POs and the beneficiaries in the weekly meetings are then discussed between the Area Manager (Employment and Income Generation) and POs (both grassroots and Social Forestry) at the area office every week with the Area Manager as the chair. The issues and concerns from these meetings are then carried out to the Regional Office where the Regional Manager (RM) and the Regional Sector Specialist (RSS, social forestry) follow-up the progress of the SF program at the field level. This meeting is chaired by the RM and directed by the RSS and participated in by all the POs (grassroots and social forestry) of all the Area Offices under the jurisdiction of the Regional Office. The meeting is combined with a day long workshop where the participants (RM, RSS, POs) discuss the demands of the beneficiaries in the SF program, problems in the program and suggestions of the beneficiaries about the change in the that the PO receive from them. Some decisions on the forestry activities are taken in this monthly regional meeting.

The next step is a monthly reunion at BRAC's head office between staff representing the bottom, middle, and upper level of BRAC's Social Forestry management. In this gathering, all POs (social forestry) from the bottom level Area Offices of BRAC in the entire country join the middle level RSS (social forestry) officials working through out the Regional Offices and share their experiences with the Sector Specialist (social forestry), Program Manager (Employment and Income Generation), and the Deputy Executive Director of BRAC's Rural Development Program (RDP). The major decisions concerning the SF program are taken in this meeting.

Although the final decisions are taken and policies are made at the center, BRAC's head office, BRAC believes that the official procedure of the decision-making process is "collective." To put it more clearly, the views of the upper management that reflect the decisions regarding the SF program are based on the experiences of the middle and bottom level officials who work constantly with the rural women. Most importantly, the decisions that are taken in the head office merely reflect the wishes of the women participants or the beneficiaries of the SF program at the grassroots level. Thus, the Sector Specialist of the SF program says confidently:

> Before any decision is taken, it is being made sure that there are enough group meetings between the beneficiaries and the POs at the field level so that final decision covers their concern. In the meeting at the head office, all the participants have equal opportunity to talk about their experiences in the field. All the BRAC officials, in the head office and in the area offices, have to spend almost 50 percent of their time in the fields, supervising the activities of the beneficiaries, and interacting directly with them in order to know about their concerns, questions, and

demands in the SF program. Therefore, whatever decisions are taken at the head office at the end, these are merely reflections of our interaction, and mutual communication with the beneficiaries (interview with the Sector Specialist).

Land Tenure Arrangements: working in a land scarce environment

The Social Forestry program of BRAC is carried out on two types of landholdings: private land of the participants and the leased land from different sources.

Private land of the beneficiaries:

BRAC encourages participation of women in SF who has some land. Although the common rule is maximum of .5 decimal of land to be eligible as a VO member in BRAC, for scarcity of land and difficulty faced in land leasing, SF is also encouraged among those people who have lands. The nursery projects do not require lots of land, and they can be carried out in homestead areas. Therefore, BRAC encourages homestead plantation of fruit and vegetation in the small homestead areas of the participants. In general, even if someone is not a member of BRAC's SF but a member of other programs, BRAC encourages them to plant trees on their land. Similarly, some areas are higher than on the plain. In those areas agricultural crops are difficult to grow (this is mostly in the northern part of Bangladesh known as the Varendra region). Therefore, BRAC is trying to identify those areas for social forestry programs and bringing the owners of these lands under the SF programs.

Leasing land from different sources:

BRAC is in the process of leasing land from the government agencies and the private absentee landlords, rich peasants who have fallow or arid land and redistribute them among the landless SF participants.

a) Leasing from the absentee landowners: It occurs mostly in northern part of Bangladesh. These landowners hand over their land to the villages for sharecropping and live in the town, or cities. What BRAC is doing is leasing lands directly from these landowners through benefit sharing agreement. After that, BRAC again leases out these lands to the landless women on some conditions. That again is based on benefit sharing agreements between BRAC and the beneficiaries.
b) Leasing from the rich peasants: BRAC leases land from the rich peasants who have fallow or arid land where they have stopped cultivation. These peasants are happy to lease out their land because through the benefit sharing agreement they also get a share in the final harvest of trees that are planted on their land by the rural women. Sometimes, it is the personal

connection between the beneficiaries and the landowner that makes the leasing possible. When the beneficiary women are selected for SF program, they are asked by the BRAC officials to approach the landowners they know in their respective villages so that BRAC can lease lands from them and give it to the participants.

c) Leasing from the government agency: The roadside strip plantations are carried out in the lands that are leased on a long-term basis from the Water Development Board of the Government of Bangladesh. These lands are then leased out to the beneficiaries for a long term on benefit sharing agreement.

The long-term leases are for 20 to 25 years and the medium-term are 10 to 12 years. BRAC prefers long-term leases so that the trees get enough time to grow fully and the beneficiaries get the right share. The leasing agreements are done in written deeds and explained in detail to the beneficiaries. Theoretically, BRAC is also supposed to give a written copy of the leasing agreement that's been signed by both BRAC officials and the beneficiaries prior to the handing over the land to the latter. When leasing land from the government agencies the terms and conditions are set by those agencies in the leasing documents that both BRAC and the beneficiaries must follow later on. In the cases of roadside plantations, the rules are that no damage can be done to the roads during plantation, rotation, and harvest. The tree species are selected by the government agencies to be planted on the river embankments so that these trees are able to protect the embankments, and can facilitate reduced soil erosion.

BRAC officials inform the participants of SF program of these rules and conditions. In the written legal documents that are to be given to the beneficiaries, the exact share of the harvest is explained in detail. However, for the convenience of the beneficiaries and for clearer understanding, BRAC workers explain verbally these conditions and rules to the beneficiaries. However, in none of the cases of leasing does BRAC pay any lease money; rather it is the agreement that the original owners of the lands will get a share of profit when the trees will be cut in the long run

Literature Review: Existing Research on BRAC

As a development organization that is involved in rural development for decades, BRAC has generated enormous attention from both internal and external observers. Research on BRAC can be divided into two major categories: research done by BRAC's own officials, and departments as opposed to external consultants who are hired to work for the organization. Numerous studies exist on BRAC's different development programs that are done by BRAC's staffs. These will not be the main focus here. Rather I would concentrate on those internal studies that are done by BRAC's hired consultants at different times. The second category of studies includes those done by external critics who have long experience in working for or studying the South Asian NGOs.

Catherine H. Lovell's (1992) *Breaking the Cycle of Poverty: The BRAC Strategy* still remains the only detail organizational analysis of BRAC. In this

study, Lovell has thoroughly analyzed BRAC as an organization, its development philosophy, and the management structures of different programs. Her research draws upon her experience working with BRAC for two and half years during 1984-86 period and for a short time again in 1990. Lovell attributes the success of BRAC as an organization to a detailed development philosophy, with a strong bureaucratic structure that, at the same time, permits free flow of interactive opinions from the grassroots level. In her analysis, Lovell illustrates the different development programs with skillfully created diagrams. In this wonderfully described success story, Lovell however, does not forget to remind us of the risks that are involved in BRAC's donor-dependence for funds. Lovell's work talks very little about the forestry program, quite understandably though. At that time, BRAC was experimenting with 'sericulture' as a component of its Rural Enterprise Program (REP) together with poultry, textiles, irrigation, livestock, fisheries and soap making.

Lovell situates BRAC in a *cooperative* state/NGO relationship. She points out the weaknesses of the Bangladesh government's effort to deliver social services to the rural poor to alleviate poverty. Financial constraints, an inefficient workforce, a centralized bureaucracy with open urban bias in developmental planning and service delivery precipitates the need for NGO intervention in the socio-economic development programs in Bangladesh.

Catherine Lovell worked for BRAC. It is possible, therefore, that she may be at times biased when she describes BRAC's developmental philosophy, especially its emphasis on women's empowerment. There are some studies done by the external observers, however, that purport to show the weaknesses of BRAC as an aid-dependent development organization engaged in rural development in Bangladesh with its altruistic development philosophy. Thus, White (1999) posits BRAC and other development NGOs in Bangladesh in a conflicting scenario where the state itself is still struggling to find its true identity and is at the same time engaged in battle with the NGOs who are attracting more and more donor trust and with that, lucrative foreign aid.[39] The NGOs have been successful in devising techniques that helped them to approach rural people more informally and quickly compared to the strict government bureaucracy. In the process, the NGOs have earned the trust of the rural people as well. However, unlike Lovell who was fascinated by the informal and intimate relationships between the BRAC's management (including the top most) and the villagers (or the members of the NGO), White observes a sense of underlying hierarchy between all these parties. In the Bangladeshi socio-cultural context, villagers calling the BRAC officials Bhai, Dada (Bengali synonyms for brother) or Apa/Didi (synonyms for sister) have little bearing on the villager's active participation or authority in BRAC's program. Thus, White says:

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[39] White sketches the ongoing struggle for Bangladesh identity nicely:

> The early euphoria of independence, and the first President, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's declaration of the 'four pillars' of the Bangladesh state—nationalism, secularism, socialism and democracy—soon gave way to internal fragmentation and external pressure. After more than a quarter century of independence, the Bangladesh state is still engaged in the continual quest for self-definition: Bengali but not Indian, Muslim but not Pakistani (1999: 311).

> The use of family terminology accurately suggests the relatively personalized, charismatic character of NGO leadership, compared with the more formal systems of government bureaucracy; but it also expresses the embedding of NGO staff interactions within a broader culture of kin and clientilist relations. For the idiom of family does not suggest equality, but rather a degree of informality within a hierarchy of reciprocal responsibilities, in which everyone knows their place (1999: 314).[40]

For White, the issues of accountability and public participation in the decision making process of the NGO development programs are crucial because the NGOs, including BRAC, started off with the political rhetoric of 'conscientization' and democratization of the political process in rural Bangladesh.[41] White's concern is that whereas the Bangladesh state is still accountable to the public regarding its activities, organizations like BRAC with its huge multi-storied building in the heart of the capital is hardly accountable to its members. The issue of public participation, for BRAC officials, has become a matter of enlightening the ignorant villagers of many methods of doing, for example, health care. In this process of "filtered" participation (p. 323), the NGOs are cut off from the important traditional knowledge that the 'ignorant' villagers have to offer. White concludes, even if collaboration between the state and the NGOs may be achieved in carrying out the development programs, the NGOs in Bangladesh may not necessarily represent the poor as they are supposed to.[42] Instead, this collaboration will be for mutual benefit of state agencies and NGOs where the latter will continue to present the development agenda as a 'techno-bureaucratic project' and poverty as a 'technical problem' (p. 325).

Wood (1997; 1994) sees more danger when the NGOs lose accountability to their members and even to the state. He calls Bangladesh a "franchise" (1997: 81) state where due to inefficiency of the government agencies, social services are franchised to the NGOs who have already gained reputation for being more effective in service delivery. Wood believes that the process of franchising may lead to erosion of accountability, totally. This is particularly problematic when the large NGOs like BRAC or Grameen Bank are trying to scale-up their programs to increase the number of members. With no state there to turn to, the members or the participants of these NGOs cannot but accept whatever service is rendered by the NGOs. Wood sees the expansion of NGOs as a mechanism by which the

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[40] About the informal relationships between the BRAC officials within the organization and outside with the villagers, see also Wood (1997).

[41] White, however, notes that even during these years (1970s and 1980s) the NGOs never really confronted the state or tried to change existing social structure, rather they focused on the local exploitative forces in the rural areas (1999: 323).

[42] The amount of money involved in the national collaborative projects will, White believes, encourage both the state and the NGOs to work jointly. That will also mean that the NGOs will try not to take up any projects that may seem controversial and "settle in the safe waters of welfare provision and infrastructure expansion" (p. 324).

NGOs can even bypass the state that results in increasing erosion of state services.[43]

Talking about the organizational management of big NGOs in Bangladesh (specifically focusing on BRAC), Wood notices a monopoly of power held by the charismatic founder(s) in dealing with donors. As the NGO grows, the hiring of the staff and the decision-making becomes more and more centralized even in cases of very small issues. Within this large bureaucratic structure, the participatory decision making that the NGOs like BRAC claim to practice, is according to Wood, "virtually impossible, yet the same organization may be promoting participatory styles of collective development activity among its target group clients." There is a contradiction here, where the means are not consistent with the ends, with social development objectives undermined as result" (1997:88). This contradiction becomes explicit when the NGO operates in different regions of the country and requires 'location-specific analysis and problem solving between local staff and target groups' (p.88). Because the NGO is required by the government and the donors to give frequent reports of how it is using the funds, reporting from the bottom level officials becomes

> ...a reaffirmation of hierarchy rather than a sharing of information and experience. Staff ceases to be generalists as sections and divisions are created to cope with the increasing specialisms and complexity of the program. Vertical lines of communication replace horizontal ones with only central leaders having a sense of the whole picture. (Wood 1997:88-89)

Hulmé and Edwards (1997) discusses the triangular relationships between the NGOs, state, and market in two possible scenarios. In one scenario, the Southern NGOs, if they really represent the local poor, will strengthen the political power of the poor to the extent that the poor themselves will be in a position to demand social and other services from the state. In another scenario, NGOs are like commercial institutions selling services to the poor and thus, the issue of 'strengthening civil society becomes redundant' (p.10). These authors situate BRAC among the second scenario NGOs. This is because BRAC calls its members "customers" not beneficiaries and consequently, the Village Organizations that BRAC takes so much pride in become nothing more than aggregations of "customers." BRAC finds it more convenient to sell their services to groups or VOs because it is for them more cost effective than selling services to the poor individually. Like Wood, Hulmé and Edwards criticize BRAC for being too much dependent on donors for funds for which it is accountable to the donors more than it is to its members.

Unlike Wood and Hulme and Edwards, Hashemi (1996) finds the big NGOs in Bangladesh, including BRAC, in subjugated relationships with the Bangladesh government and the donor agencies. According to him, BRAC like any other NGOs started with 'political' slogans of empowering the poor

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[43] For detail analysis of NGO accountability to the state, donors and public in the developing countries, see Hulme and Edwards (1997); also see Edwards and Hulme (1995).

(democracy, equality, human rights etc.) but gradually moved to credit disbursement as a means of improving poor people's lives. BRAC and other NGOs were warned by the state 'not to be political' (p. 127).[44] At the same time, however, BRAC is subjugated to the donor agencies because of the fact that credit disbursement became BRAC's agenda only when the donors were happy about that. He sadly notes that BRAC's nonformal education, immunization, and diarrheal disease controls are all due to donor pressure.[45] As a result of this dual pressure from the government and the donors, Hashemi believes, the big NGOs have lost their accountability to their beneficiaries, i.e., the rural poor.[46]

In order to be able to improve the living conditions of the rural poor in Bangladesh, Hashemi would like to see reduced government and donor dependency among the large NGOs. It is not impossible to achieve, he thinks, for increasing accountability of the NGOs to and reliance on the beneficiaries will strengthen the position of the NGOs in Bangladesh. However, it is really depends on the NGOs leaders and which way they want to do the rural development—by staying with the poor in the villages (like many NGOs do in India) or by staying away from them and making policies of rural development while driving luxurious vehicles (the costs of which are borne by the donors).

Buckland (1998) evaluates three NGOs in Bangladesh—BRAC, Proshika, and Grameen Bank. According to him, these NGOs do not practice participation as 'empowerment' (where the rural people will be take their own informed decisions); they practice participation as 'contribution' (here the participants are engaged in the program of an organization to help the organization achieve its development agenda. These organizations have been successful in increasing the physical and human capital of their members but they do not help to build social capital among the members. By social capital here he means the networks and norms of reciprocity among the poor members that help to "achieve participation as *empowerment*, and re-establishing indigenous sustainable organizations and institutions" (p. 237, italics original). Buckland argues that NGOs like BRAC are able to create relationships '*between*' their staff and the grassroots members, and which helps the organization to carry out its developmental objectives smoothly. What is missing is the network '*among*' the members themselves and they are becoming more and more dependent on the agency practitioners. Therefore, in times of crisis (for example, withdrawal of the development project by the organization) the poor people become vulnerable. Many laud BRAC and Proshika's agricultural irrigation projects where these two organizations have brought the rural elite and the poor into the same benefit-sharing process. But Buckland fears that in the case of withdrawal of support by the agency, the rural rich may easily exploit the poor people. Therefore, Buckland concludes that if the

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[44] It was, in fact, the result of continuing deteriorating relationship between the NGOs and the government that has been described earlier.

[45] For him, donor pressure is so obvious and inevitable that the current donor interest in HIV and AIDS are "only matter of time before the large NGOs begin to integrate HIV and AIDS into their activities" (p. 130).

[46] However, even if the NGOs are accountable to the poor, Hashemi does not think the urban educated staff members of these NGOs will be able to understand the real needs of the poor. Thus, the rhetoric of 'conscientization' is something, he says, which never exists.

NGOs want to enhance the self-sustaining capacity of the rural poor, they must not forget about the 'inter-participant' social capital together with the existing agency staff-participant network (p. 246).

Rao and Kelleher (1995) have pointed out that due to the different socio-political environment in Bangladesh, BRAC's overall emphasis on women's empowerment in different areas may not be programmatically possible. They argue that in this environment the possibility of women's empowerment through changing gender relations is weak and the existing structural realities simply ensure long-term inapplicability of BRAC's rural development programs. In another independent study, Goetz (1997) shows that BRAC's policy of gender equality and demonstration of BRAC's progressive image within the organization itself, have put tremendous pressure on its female staff. BRAC's female-staff have to work within the dominant culture of Bangladesh society and confront considerable difficulties in keeping up with their job's required physical exertion. The difficulties arise from women's typical lack of exposure to sport; lack of appropriate basic facilities (such as sanitation, eating areas) in the rural environment; reproductive issues and gender-biased management of sexual relations. Ebdon (1995) in another study argues that NGOs like BRAC and Grameen Bank are engaged in competition with each other to win the membership of the rural women. This actually hampers the development process of the smaller NGOs in rural Bangladesh. BRAC, like Grameen Bank, takes away the members of smaller NGOs. This process, he points out, is also responsible for intra-household conflict between wife and husband regarding the change of allegiance from one NGO to another NGO. These organizations' priority on rapid expansion process diverts organizational resources away from development for 'others' (women) to development for 'selves' (the organization). These studies no doubt challenge BRAC's philosophy of development and expose the gaps that exist between its theory and practice of development agendas.

Khandker and Khalily's (1996) study of BRAC may be considered as an important World Bank observation of BRAC's RDP and RCP programs.[47] In this predominantly economic study, these authors examine the sustainability of BRAC's RDP and RCP on the basis of institutional, financial, and borrower viability.[48] Fascinated by the management structure of BRAC in service delivery, they are convinced that although BRAC is currently steered by its founder, the Executive Director, it has developed an "effective procedure for management succession so that it does not depend too much on the leadership of one person"

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[47] "*Pursuing Common Goals*" is the World Bank's most explicit study of the relationships of ADAB and the NGOAB in Bangladesh. In this study, World Bank encourages better relationships between the government and the development NGOs in Bangladesh.

[48] "By *institutional viability*, we mean that the program is able to deliver services on a sustained basis. In particular, a sustainable institution must have effective procedures for management succession. *Financial viability* means that the program can equalize the cost per dollar lent with the price it charges for lending to its borrowers. *Borrowers' viability* means that the benefits from the projects funded by the program meet the borrowers' cost of borrowing and that the borrowers have an incentive to repay the loan. These three aspects of sustainability are interrelated and important. While institutional development and financial viability promote stability, the BRAC's overall sustainability depends on the viability of its members" (Khander and Khalily, 1996:5).

(P. xiv). However, Khandker and Khalily conclude that if BRAC wants to see its RDP and RCP programs become sustainable (which means the sustainability of the whole organization, shortly) scaling-up is the only option. In this thoroughly investigated study, which gives a complete description of the organizational structure, there is hardly any concern being shown by the authors about the issues like borrower participation and the organization's accountability to the members.

The literature on BRAC discussed so far does not talk about BRAC's social forestry program at all; rather it analyzes BRAC as an organization that engages in development activities. The main focus of the present study is social forestry but these studies are useful in the sense that they help us to understand how BRAC as an NGO approaches its different programs. Social forestry being just one of BRAC's many programs; it should not be different in its management and operational procedure than other programs.

BRAC's Social Forestry Program: Some Observations

To my knowledge, no independent or external study has been done yet on BRAC's social forestry program. The researchers of BRAC's Research and Evaluation Division have produced most of the literature that exists on the SF program, though not much. These studies describe, in general, the problems and prospects of social forestry in Bangladesh.

"Social Forestry in Bangladesh Context: Problems, Responses, and Recommendations" (1989) is by far the most extensive policy study done by the RED. This report documents the massive destruction of forests and trees in Bangladesh in the face of unabated population pressure and increasing poverty. However, it criticizes the forestry activities undertaken by the Forest Department of Bangladesh government as inefficient and ineffective for several reasons: the Forestry Extension Services and the Community Forestry Project of early 1980s operated by the Forest Department (FD) failed to consider the traditional tree species (the species were imported from Australia); there was no real participation of the community members (the villagers were only 'hired labor'); and finally, the FD did not consult the local people on the methods of tree plantations that eventually brought the two groups into conflict (p.26).

The study then describes the forestry programs undertaken by some NGOs including BRAC. It suggests a series of social, technical and institutional changes to approach sustainable forestry in Bangladesh. For example, it stresses 'meaningful participation' of the poor people in the whole process of designing, implementing and evaluating the forestry program. Also, it argues for decision-making power for the poor in the forest management process (p. 35). Involvement of women in the program is seen as very crucial.

The technical aspect suggests that the tree species should be selected from within the 'indigenous multi-purpose' species to ensure spontaneous public participation. Post-planting protection of trees is another concern for the study that may be ensured by giving the participants their rightful share of the end products. The study sees the technical incapability of the extension workers as one of the major impediments of the forestry program.

For forestry programs in Bangladesh, the REC is concerned with the absence of any institutional clarity on land tenure issues. "Tenurial aspects," it says, "include not only the duration of tenure but also the nature of the lease and the sanctioning government agency" (p. 37). It argues that the participating communities should be clear about the ownership of the land. Land is the most important and also the scarcest resource in Bangladesh. Therefore, if the participants clearly know that the lands they are planting trees on belong to them, any forestry program will be productive.

The RED study believes in "gradual, phased, and interactive" forestry programs that build on the experiences learned everyday. However, the problem with the current forestry programs in Bangladesh, according to this report, is that they believe in rapid scaling-up of the program and the needs of the program participants are sacrificed (p. 38). The study concludes that a National Coordination Committee represented by both the government agencies and the NGOs may be able to come up with a precise national land use policy that will ensure sustainable forestry in Bangladesh. The later studies by Rahman, a researcher in the Research and Evaluation Division study, views the absence of public participation, uncertain land tenure and lack of collaboration between the government and the NGOs in the forestry programs of Bangladesh. He calls for a common model to monitor and evaluate the forestry programs, as there is none. Rahman also suggests a multi-disciplinary research group to study the problems and the solutions for the deforestation and the environmental degradation in Bangladesh.

The most recent source of information on BRAC's social forestry program is the half-yearly progress reports that BRAC prepares for the European Union's Food Security Unit. As the EU funds BRAC's agroforestry and block plantation programs, the organization is required to update EU about the programs. Thus, in the first progress report that was prepared in March 31, 1998 (for the period of July-December, 1997), BRAC describes its mixed experience with the SF program. Because the program was started late due to natural calamities, BRAC did not find enough time to train the farmers. This means that the program started with little training for the women participants or beneficiaries. In spite of that, however, BRAC enjoyed during this period rapid scale-up and more trees being planted on fallow or unutilized land. It was also expected that the involvement of women in the social forestry program would enhance their status in their households and the communities.

The second progress report (February, 1999) is much more optimistic than the first one. It talks about all the successes that had been achieved in the last six months (July-December, 1998). About the tree species, it says that the trees that are planted are "culturally adaptable, economically and technically viable" (p.7). Also, the soil fertility has increased rapidly due to soil and water conservation and organic matter deposit in the soil (p.7). Vegetation intake of the women participants and their household members has increased significantly because of the vegetable plantation under the agroforestry program. Most importantly BRAC leased land to the women who had no land before and these women are given "quality training" by its extension staffs.

In both reports, BRAC seems to be very optimistic about the forestry program and does not mention the process of public participation and the issue of land tenure arrangements. The time frame within which these reports were made may seem too soon for the forestry programs to be called sustainable.

The above concerns become apparent in the European Union (EU) field report of BRAC's SF program. Although BRAC's neatly arranged program management impresses the independent EU visitors, it finds some major problems at the same time. For example, the EU found that the beneficiaries of BRAC's SF program are not necessarily the poorest women. Rather BRAC encourages those women to join its SF program who have some lands of their own. Secondly, the logbooks to keep track of income, expenditure etc. that BRAC provides to the women are not properly understood by them. More often than not, BRAC staff themselves prepare the logbooks for the women. The EU's Food Security Unit director thinks that the logbooks may contain useful information but BRAC's management does not analyze it for further improvement of the program. The most important finding is the inability of the women participants to take part in the decision making process that is controlled by the BRAC management. What happens, as a result, is that the women plant the trees the staff tells them to plant, the women have no choice. This leads to a lack of sharing information among the women members, the EU believes.

As to the first problem, the Food Security Unit of EU suggests that BRAC should go for long term leasing of government lands so that the really needy women can get access to lands for planting trees. It also suggests innovative ideas and techniques from BRAC so that the women themselves can manage the logbooks that will give them the real motivation to participate. The EU's most important policy suggestion for BRAC's SF program is to give the women the decision-making authority so that they can make informed decision as to the choice of tree species.

The other studies on the feasibility of SF program in Bangladesh mention uncertain land tenure, lack of GOB-NGO collaboration, inadequate technical knowledge of the foresters, absence of market channels etc. as the commonly noticed problems (Khaleque 1993; Khan and Begum 1997; Momin 1991; Asaduzzaman 1989; Lewis 1992). These studies speak for greater decision making authority of the participants in regards to indigenous tree selection. However, Alim and Haq (1995) view the traditional species as having no 'economic' value in the market. Therefore, they opt for trees that have higher commercial values in the market. Accordingly, they think that the participants should be taught about the profitability of the commercial tree crops (p. 86). Lewis's observation (1992) on the forestry program in Bangladesh and the NGO-FD relation is very relevant to the present study. Referring to the forestry program undertaken by Proshika (an NGO in Bangladesh), he notices that the tree species selection is one of the problematic issues that bring the NGOs (together with their members) and the FD officials into confrontations.

Proshika started different components of its forestry program in 1976 onward. The organization experienced the hostility of different levels of rural elite backed by the Forest Department officials. For example, the roadside forestry

program started well but could not be replicated in other areas because the Forest Department officials deemed the local participants as a potential threat to their political authority. In its forestry protection program, the local people again faced hostilities from the elite and the FD officials. Here, the local people, backed by Proshika, wanted to protect the Sal forests that were illegally enjoyed by the elite and shared by the FD officials. Proshika, instead of getting cooperation from the Forest Department, unfortunately was opposed in carrying out its "people forestry." The reason, says Lewis:

> The 'people's forestry" approach Proshika has developed runs counter to the government's strategy, which is based upon the substitution of natural forest with monoculture plantation of exotic imported species which do not cater to the subsistence needs of the poor, but instead serve the profit motives of the local rich (1992:21).

With these internal and external critiques of BRAC as an organization and its Social Forestry program and other forestry programs in Bangladesh, we may be in a position to analyze the current situations in BRAC''s SF program. One major drawback of the previous studies of BRAC's SF program is not only that they are descriptive but they also lack in-depth observations of the goals and objectives, public participation and the land tenure arrangements. The next chapter focuses specifically on these issues based on the data collected during the fieldwork.

CHAPTER 4

Social Forestry Program of BRAC: The Reality

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) carries out multi-faceted rural development programs based on a well thought out participatory philosophy. The Social Forestry program of BRAC has its own goals and objectives, a precise conception of the nature of women's participation in the program and a land tenure arrangement, as explained in the previous chapter. The fieldwork in Bangladesh has revealed some differences between BRAC's theoretical projections of the SF program along these three dimensions. The next section will focus on these discrepancies. The strategies and technologies used by BRAC management to achieve the goals and objectives, the organization's description of women's participation, and the external and internal constraints of the land tenure arrangement under which the SF program operates are described.

Goals and Objectives: Whose goals and whose objectives?

There are two major goals that BRAC envisions to achieve in its SF program: poverty alleviation through increased food security and improving the degrading environment by planting trees. However, ground level data reveal that the goals set by BRAC may not necessarily correspond to those envisioned by the women participants of the SF program. To the rural women, SF program is a new source of guaranteed income flow, for now and for the future. The monthly wage or salary that is provided by BRAC to the women in the first year of participation is a huge incentive for them to join the SF program. Thus, the common response as to what are the goal(s) of the women members is:

> We joined the program for money and for trees, which will be ours after certain period. We need money for longer period of time. Trees take long time to grow. One-year financial support is very inadequate. With that money, we can buy fertilizer, bamboo, and seeds for plants. When the money will stop coming, what we will do? BRAC should give us money for at least two years. We do not want increase in the present monthly wage, we just want more time.

During the entire fieldwork, after a few minutes of conversation with the women participants, the women brought out the issue of monthly wage on their own. In one case, the situation was really embarrassing for the BRAC officials. I was talking to some women members while they were working in the plantations. At one stage, all the women started talking in high voice to press their demand for monthly wage for a longer period of time. The BRAC officials who accompanied me in the field visit came to the spot and all the women, again, started telling me how important it is for them to have money for an extended period of time. In general, while the women are more concerned about the duration of their monthly salary provided by BRAC, the issue of environmental degradation or deforestation does not appear to be a primary concern for the women participants. When asked

about environmental degradation and usefulness of SF to prevent that, all women answered what they are taught by the BRAC officials—

> If we plant trees, they will give us shelter, food, and timber. The trees will protect the soil from erosion when it rains. The tree leaves will fall on the ground and will make the land more fertile. This is very important for the environment (*poribesh*).[49]

The women learn about the effects of environmental degradation caused by deforestation during the short training provided by BRAC both to the women members and its staff. Making the environment one of the major goals does not, however, mean that BRAC is doing everything right. As far as environmental improvement is concerned, BRAC's choice of tree species is probably not an appropriate means to achieve that goal. To check deforestation, and environmental degradation, BRAC tries to increase the number of trees, increase biomass production in land, and create mass environmental awareness among the women members. At the same time, BRAC claims to give special attention to the 'quality' of trees and native traditional species are encouraged over the foreign species. However, the trees the women plants are neither of native origin nor known to the women. In the majority lands, leased or BRAC owned, the trees are Eucalyptus, Sisoo, Ipil-ipil, and Acacia. These trees, especially *eucalyptus* and other leguminous trees like *acacia,* are regarded as fast growing commercial trees that can be useful for paper and pulp industries. However, different studies have shown that in order to plant these trees, the soil has to have high degree of *nitrogen* to sustain them (De Bell et al. 1985; Eldridge et al. 1994; Adlard 1988). All these studies recommend not to plant eucalyptus and acacia if the land is not properly prepared with fossil fuel. Prasad and Ramaswamy (1992: 35) argue that the governments of the poor countries to favor wood-based industries at the expense of the needs of rural poor plant these trees. Examples of adverse effects of *eucalyptus* and resistance by the local farmers abound in many developing countries (Tegbaru 1997; Shiva 1993). The women members of the SF program of BRAC, who have their own land, plant traditional species such as mango, guava, lemon, jack fruit etc. The majority of the women agreed that they are more used to the benefits of these trees and do not know anything about the fast growing trees. They prefer the traditional trees, which have traditionally given them food, fodder, and house building materials. BRAC's claim that fast growing trees have increased the biomass production in land is not backed up by scientific research

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[49] BRAC's Research and Evaluation Division surveyed 1556 household heads from 70 villages in ten different regions in Bangladesh to see the extent of environmental awareness among the rural people. The research showed that the rural women have very little knowledge about the impact of diminishing firewood for cooking because of overuse of them, deforestation etc. Overall, the rural people could feel the change in physical environment caused by polluted water, and chemical fertilizer used for high agricultural yield, but do not understand what caused them in the first place. The research, however, also revealed a strong positive correlation between the membership in NGOs and the rural people's environmental awareness, i.e., the members of NGOs, are more concerned about the environmental damage than the non-members (RED 1997).

findings. The claim is verbal and very informal.[50] Different experimental studies show that at least five years of research is necessary to observe the impact of eucalyptus and leguminous trees in biomass production (De Bell et al. 1985; Adlard 1992). The Research and Evaluation Division of BRAC does not carry out in-depth scientific research to study the environmental impacts of foreign species (however, the forest plantations are new and therefore, no scientific research can be carried out to see the increase in bio-mass production). The evaluation study carried out by BRAC's Research and Evaluation Division (1996) depends mostly on verbal accounts of the BRAC officials who visit the plantations on a regular basis. In that study, only the plastic bags that are used to grow the plants in nurseries are regarded as an 'environmental hazard'. Therefore, the lack of any scientific study on the impact of the foreign trees encourage BRAC's upper, middle and lower level management to describe them to the women participants as "environment friendly" and "economically beneficial." Even if the BRAC officials are aware of the adverse effects of eucalyptus and leguminous trees, they argue in favor of planting these trees because they are fast growing:

> In sandy land, we simply plant the trees that grow fast. The participants will get profit from these trees after few years. If we are to change the species, we have to change the soil first, make it fertile. To do that, we have to make big pits that may fertilize the land gradually. But it takes time and money. So, we don't go for that option. (Regional Sector Specialist, Social Forestry 1999)

BRAC, therefore, chooses the easy option—fast growing trees that will survive in the fallow, arid land and grow quickly. Most importantly, BRAC does not face any strong opposition from the women beneficiaries about these trees. Although the women want to plant indigenous trees, it is not because these trees are more environment-friendly, but because the women are traditionally more used to those trees. As long as the foreign species give them firewood and timber in the future, they are ready to plant these trees. All the women members agreed that they are much better off now after they joined the SF program. While most of them did not possess any land before, now they have use of a piece of land thanks to BRAC. Most of the women respondents are optimistic about the monetary return from these trees in future.

Incorporation of the objective of 'increased food security' that relates to the food component of BRAC's goals, is not strongly backed up with technical assistance from the organization. In other words, there is a gap between the objective and the means to achieve that objective. For example, agroforestry is the major SF component that BRAC claims to have increased the food supply to the families of the women members of SF program. In reality, there is no long-term

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[50] During the fieldwork, I asked the BRAC officials who took me to different plantations about this claim. They said, it is based on the day-to-day observation. While there were hardly any trees on these lands, there was naturally no falling leaves. Now, with trees on the land, the dead leaves fall on the ground and are decomposed. That should increase the bio mass level in the land. They admitted that no scientific research is done by BRAC to measure the bio mass level after the trees were planted.

stable flow of vegetable and food, rather it is very short term and depends on many natural and human factors. First of all, the participants can plant vegetables on agroforestry plantations only in the first year. As the trees grow, the participants cannot afford to do two things at the same time—growing vegetables the seed prices of which is high and look after the trees that need irrigation and fertilizer. The focus is narrowed down to the latter, since the trees are supposed to be more beneficial considering the timber value in the market. However, again, taking care of the plants is not an easy job where the women depend on the rainfall in the absence of any irrigation facilities provided by BRAC. In the face of that, even the BRAC workers who constantly visit and supervise the agroforestry activities do not know what to do. Thus, according to a Program Organizer (grassroots):

> Sometimes they (the participants) do not listen to what I say. I advise them to plant vegetables. But they say, "we will grow vegetable only when it will rain. These plants need water." So, they grow vegetables only if it rains. Also, these people are very poor. They often tell me why not BRAC give them free seeds for planting vegetables? But it is not possible for us. However, we cannot also blame the women for not planting vegetables all the time.

The BRAC management is very well aware of these problems, prices of seeds and irrigation, but they have not done much to handle the problems. It is imperative for all the women members of BRAC to buy the seeds from the local market or from BRAC's nurseries at a regular price. The price is not subsidized for the women because of the operational cost of the program. As far as the irrigation is concerned, it is not even in BRAC's agenda to arrange for water supply for the SF program. As there are no immediate solutions to these factors, BRAC has not been able to make any formal agreement with the beneficiaries to plant vegetables on their land for nutritional purposes. At best the BRAC workers can 'request' the women to do that and it depends on the particular member's financial ability and nature, of course. Therefore, there is a clear discrepancy between BRAC's claim (in one of the progress reports to European Commission's Food Security Unit) that the nutritional intake of the poor women members has increased significantly due to the agroforestry program. The reality is, the women are much more aware of the benefits of the agroforestry program (growing vegetables and planting fast growing trees) thanks to BRAC's awareness training, but this awareness does not motivate the members to do the vegetable cultivation. Some more economically stable women participants, however, agree with the fact that regular planting of vegetables has resulted in increased nutritional intake by the family members and some extra income for the family.

Whereas definite marketing channels should solidify any sustainable forestry program, BRAC management has not yet devised any kind of marketing strategy to sell the timber when the trees grow. The BRAC workers tell the women that the timber will be sold, but do not tell them how. In cases of vegetable cultivation, the women members end up selling them in the local market where the

prices are very irregular. The BRAC officials argued that 'when the time will come' (ten to fifteen years after) BRAC will definitely develop a structured marketing strategy so that the women get proper value for their trees; it is BRAC's responsibility to market the timber and handle the financial transactions.

If BRAC is trying to make the SF program sustainable then there are man-made factors that threaten that objective. At the initial stages of tree planting, the women need to build fences so that the plants are protected from grazing cattle. The fences are mostly built of bamboo that the women buy from the local market at a high price. Unfortunately, there are numerous incidents of stolen fences. For the women members who cannot afford to buy costly bamboo several times, the situation is frightening. Showing almost empty bamboo fences, one women respondent regretfully noted:

> Fences that we build to protect trees do not stay for long. People steal them during the nights. You see, hardly any fence is left. My husband tries to catch them in their act. When he does that, nobody comes. Now, I have to build fences otherwise the plants will not survive. But bamboo is so expensive in the market!

There is no effective institutional technique that BRAC can use to prevent this serious problem. It tried, at the initial stage of its SF program, with the "social fencing" slogan—collective awareness among the women members to catch the culprits. However, collective awareness (the awareness goes into BRAC's SF management as well) has not produced any collective action on the part of the women members and the BRAC workers. There are too many people to catch. What happened as a result, the BRAC management too has given up on preventing the problem, and has taken shelter to fatalism. The same respondent says:

> I had reported about this to the BRAC official in the beginning. The fences were stolen gradually, in bits and pieces everyday. The BRAC official came and saw the whole process of the disappearance of the fences. But he said, "Those who did that will be punished by GOD."

This was one of the major reasons, coupled with high cost of fertilizer and seeds that prompted the women to demand an increase in their monthly salary or wage. During the fieldwork, the unanimous opinion of the women beneficiaries was that the duration, not the amount, of the monthly wage should be increased from one to at least two or possibly three years. The BRAC officials are aware of this demand and many of them even support the women. They understand that one year of financial aid is too meager considering the operating costs that the participants have to bear. However, the EC's Food Security Unit, where the money comes from, does not agree. The Chief of FSU says:

> When you go out, speak to the beneficiaries and ask them, is it a good deal of money? I would say of course it is, even for me four hundred taka each month (little less $15 cdn).....and of course it helps them

> and of course they would like to have it for three years, seven of ten years. I think the issue here is you have got sixty million people living below the poverty line in Bangladesh. That is a big number. You need to address them. The more you reach, the sooner you eradicate poverty in Bangladesh. So, the question then becomes how do you make your program as efficient as possible, right?.....you can say may be you can get more development for the same money, may be there is some one who needs the money even more.

With no further increase in monthly salary for the women, BRAC, therefore, has to act within the available resources. With strict organizational activities, from the top management down to the bottom, BRAC tries to utilize the fund as efficiently as possible. Regular field supervisions by the POs (grassroots), RSS (Social Forestry), Area Manager, and collecting information and sharing between the layers of management have made BRAC's SF program as vigorous as any other of its programs. A line of dedicated officials who are ready to act according to the necessity, be it an order from the upper management or request from the middle or bottom level management, has enabled the SF management to keep track of every single detail of the program. However, in spite of this, BRAC seems to have done very little to 'empower' the rural women that might be possible otherwise through increased network formation with other government agencies and NGOs engaged in SF program. BRAC presently has not any working relationship with the government agencies like the Forest Department and land revenue agency. Consequently, the women members do not have any access to any other information regarding forestry that might accrue from a possible network with the government agencies. The absence of any inter-institutional network has thrown both the BRAC management and the rural women into a dependency relationship. For example, while the regular weekly and monthly meetings between the BRAC officials and the women members have helped BRAC management to make sure that everything is happening as planned, there is little evidence that the women have been able to form social networks among themselves. This has resulted in almost zero social capital for the women who only interact with the BRAC officials (mostly grassroots level, though), not among themselves. The women are now increasingly dependent solely on BRAC because they do not have any other place to fall back on. Similarly, BRAC's dependence on the European Union is quite evident. BRAC is busier in preparing progress reports twice a year to convince the EC's Food Security Unit that 'everything is going fine and BRAC is not wasting EC's tax payers' money.' Absolute dependence on the EU for funds has made the whole SF program extremely vulnerable. If the EU stops funding, which is not impossible at all, the whole program will be in jeopardy with the women members likely to be the hardest hit.[51]

The very approach of BRAC's SF program may raise questions. Like other programs, in the SF program the membership or participation is strictly limited to

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[51] During the fieldwork, EC's FSU abruptly stopped funding two projects that were previously defined as 'successful' by the EC consultant economist in Dhaka, Bangladesh (Daily Inquilab, July 19, 1999).

rural women, not men. Why women-only approach? In reply, the majority of the BRAC officials referred to the working principle of BRAC:

> The rural women are deprived of social and economic opportunities. They are oppressed both within and outside their families. They do not have the ownership of land at all. Thus, BRAC's intention is to mobilize the women, socially and politically, under the SF program.

One should remember that BRAC operates within the existing social structure of rural Bangladesh. The household tension between husband and wife is always present. If only the women are selected from the family, it may cause further tensions between the members within. Moreover, the SF program is geared to enhance the environmental awareness among *all* rural people. It is not clear, therefore, how far this unilateral selection of women for the SF program will help BRAC to achieve that objective.

Another potential weakness stems from the fact that BRAC has a large contingent of very poorly trained forestry workers. BRAC hires people from any discipline. The upper, middle level SF officials have master's degree in different disciplines—social science, science, and humanities. These people are turned into foresters by giving them five-day training in BRAC's Training And Resource Centre (TARC). What are they taught in five days? Mostly the technical aspects of tree plantation—how to plant trees, take care of them, when to use fertilizer etc. They are also taught the environmental implications of deforestation and usefulness of planting trees. However, this short training does not prepare them to explore things. Rather, they do what they have been taught to do, and convey to the women what they have been told to say, "Eucalyptus will bring you timber and money," "no matter what trees are you planting, it will improve the environment," etc. During the fieldwork, it is revealed that many of the SF officials at the lower level of management do not even know the concept of 'sustainable forestry.' They work in a routine environment that starts very early in the morning, everyday. However, many BRAC officials regretted that they often have to do overtime but are not paid extra for that. Not that everybody likes the job, but there is hardly any other job out there. The availability of a large contingent of unemployed graduates is one of the major opportunities that BRAC enjoys in scaling up the SF program.

Public Participation: Is it the way it should be?

BRAC's SF program, as we have seen, revolves around the pivotal concern for poor women's active participation in planning, decision-making, and implementing the program. BRAC claims that any decision that is taken at the Centre of its management reflects the thoughts of the grassroots women as their voices are heard through rigorous communication between them and the middle and bottom level management. In reality, it seems that women's participation speaks more of necessity on their part, to reduce the poverty in the family than anything than can be called 'spontaneous' participation. Women's participation,

(the meaning of participation is again questionable) is not only filtered from the beginning but limited and abruptly stops at the beginning of the process.

The participation of women in the SF program may not be active and spontaneous because the program does not originate with them. It is the organization that came with the idea of planting trees in fallow, marginal, and arid land that, it thought, might alleviate poverty and check deforestation in Bangladesh. BRAC selects the areas to start a SF program depending on the availability of land and then begins the process of mobilizing the women under the program. In most cases, the areas that are selected for SF program are already under the coverage of BRAC's Rural Development Program (RDP). This way, it becomes a little easier for the BRAC workers to *motivate* the poor women when the latter already know about BRAC's program. BRAC workers then explain the benefits of the SF program to those women who are eager to join the program with the hope of an extra income on top of their husbands' that is very minimal. Therefore, for the relentless BRAC workers it is not difficult at all to find interested women for the SF program. However, not all the women who want to join the program can eventually make it. Unfortunately, women's involvement in the SF program is *filtered* through a process of elimination that meets the organization's target, not the women's desires and needs.

To be members of any program of BRAC, first of all the women have to join the Village Organization. Thus, the non-members of a Village Organization do not have any access to the program. After the women become members of VO, BRAC starts the selection of SF participants and the process is strictly controlled by the organization. When the women are told the benefits of the SF program and of the monthly wage for at least one year combined with future financial gains through selling of wood, many of them want to join the program. But then, BRAC sets some criteria for the women to join the program. The criteria—close proximity to program area, full-time supervision of trees, and physical ability to handle all work related to tree rearing—as a matter of fact, work in favor of BRAC. Because, close proximity ultimately means those who live near the program sites but have more than .5 decimal of land (who should not qualify as hard core poor according to BRAC's principle) can join the program; the land-less women who do not live near the SF program areas cannot join the program. It is revealed from the data collection that many women actually possess more than .5 decimal of land and grow trees on their land from long before they joined BRAC's SF program. The second criterion means only those can join the program who do not have any work outside the family and thus, can look after the trees, protect them from grazing animals, and, jealous neighbors who want to destroy the trees. To be a member of a SF program means that a woman has to have the physical ability and strength needed for irrigation, weed removal, and fertilizing the trees; there is no opportunity for the older women although they may have hopes of joining the SF program.

After the women are selected, they enter a pre-determined decision making process that is controlled by BRAC's top management. The process features a superordinate-subordinate relationship between the women participants and the BRAC management that begins with the short orientation training given to the

women by TARC. The orientation program has to be attended by the women to get rid of their "ignorance." Here, they are taught how to plant trees, what type of trees are good for commercial benefit and what are the rules and regulations to be followed during their membership in the SF program. After the orientation is over, the women are ready to plant trees that are overwhelmingly foreign in nature and supplied by BRAC. The women, who have never heard of Eucalyptus, Akashiya, or Ipil-ipil before, hesitantly convey their concern to the POs (grassroots) and the RSS (Social Forestry) when the latter visit the fields but in vein. Initially the POs used to share the voices of women with the RSS and the Regional Managers (RM), and then, RSS, RM occasionally carried them through to the upper management of BRAC. The upper management, however, considers the poor women too illiterate and poor to understand their own benefits.

The weekly meetings between the POs (grassroots and Social Forestry) and the women participants probably signify more a routine process of an organization than a participatory discussion process. These meetings are supposed to strengthen women's voices and demands, as heard by the Program Organizers and then channeled to the upper management to facilitate "collective" decision making at the end (Sector Specialist, SF, 1999). In practice, the flow of communication between the BRAC workers and the women in the weekly meetings is virtually one way. If the women have concerns and demands in these meetings, the obvious and pre-framed answer of the POs are "we will tell this to the higher authority." By the time their messages get to the middle and upper management, they have already become weaker, and when they are raised softly at the monthly meeting at the Head Office, the women's issues become more of a regular formality to talk about not a pressing concern for BRAC's management. BRAC's theoretical claim of a 'bottom-up' decision making process is negated by its top-down practice that is strongly justified by the upper management:

> There is a difference between what has been happening in other countries and in Bangladesh. You admit that, I also admit that. There is a significant amount controversy centering the issue of need assessment and decision making of the poor people. Some people call them "top-down" approach, some "bottom-up." But I don't want to involve myself here in any of these controversies. What I like to say is that the poor people cannot assess their needs by themselves; rather they have to be made aware of the different options. They really don't know what they really need. Perhaps you know that 62 percent of the total population of Bangladesh is non-literate, they can't read or write. So, if you ask them what is the most economically useful tree in Bangladesh, they can't tell you. Because she is ignorant of the species that grow in Bangladesh. Maybe she will be able to tell you about the trees that she is familiar with in her territory. Furthermore, she doesn't know soil. Suppose she wants to plant jackfruit tree in the land. But I think it is not possible because of the soil type there. She wants to plant Mehaghani. But it takes forty years to grow up fully. She can't wait that long to get the return. They don't understand that. Therefore,

> they need to be made aware of different species and their usefulness. Trees that will give them fast return. If you say that they will decide on the species of trees to be planted, I really can't agree with you. On the basis of my experience, I can tell you that these people don't know much about trees. However, this is not to mean that they should not be consulted. Yes, they should be consulted and made fully aware of the usefulness of trees that we tell them to plant. The planning of course should be joint effort between BRAC and the rural people. (Interview with the Sector Specialist, Social Forestry, 1999).

As evident from the Sector Specialist, BRAC stresses more commercial trees for short-term profit for both the women and the organization than sustainable forestry. It is openly admitted that women's involvement in the decision making process is non-existent. BRAC relies, in this logic, on the rampant poverty situation in Bangladesh that has made the country a unique case of 'women's participation.' The Director of EU's Food Security Unit agrees that the decision making process in SF program is far from being "collective"; rather it is clearly 'top-down.' But again he believes that the situation cannot change because of the social and cultural traditions in the country. In a socio-cultural scenario where the educated and wealthy people are regarded as 'superiors' by the rest of the society, it is accepted that despite the rhetoric used by the NGOs in Bangladesh, the poor women will always listen to what the BRAC officials say and act accordingly.

The women participants aside, the middle and the bottom level BRAC management have hardly been given any authority to take major decisions at the field level. In a communication framework characterized by the regularity of the communication, these officials work from dawn to dusk (and for some, weekends and weekdays are almost the same in terms of running around to collect the information from the ground) to make sure that the orders from the upper authority are implemented. For the SF program, it is the given number of plants that have to be planted and protected, and at the initial stage of tree planting, the survival rate is high enough to make a good progress report to the EC's Food Security Unit. There is little or no scope for the middle or bottom level workers to take situation-specific decisions as these are already pre-determined by the upper management. A Regional Sector Specialist (Social Forestry) commented that they act like "mediator" between the upper management at the Head Office and the SF plantations at the field level. In the absence of any innovative ideas, the middle and the bottom level workers do not feel encouraged to discuss something new with the upper management. For example, in one area it was noticed that the women are planting some kind of small trees the roots of which are edible and for many people in the surrounding areas it has become almost a substitute for potatoes. The PO (Social Forestry) and RSS are well aware of this new plant imported by some villagers from the other side of the border (India) and they also noticed it during their regular field visits but did not share the information with the upper management. Why not? Because, the upper management usually does not go 'beyond the structured ideas.' New ideas mean new costs, and more time.

The upper management itself, however, works within a structured decision making process where the organization has very little say in the decision-making process. None of the BRAC officials interviewed from the middle and bottom level was able to locate the source of the choice of tree species. The upper management too has no authority in the selection of tree species. It is argued that this is determined by the Asian Development Bank who helped the Government of Bangladesh to formulate a Forestry Master Plan for the first time in the history of this country:

> the *plan* contains an implied, if not explicit, bias towards the expansion of planted forests of choice species and their exploitation on a commercial scale. The Government of Bangladesh is amending the Forest Act of 1927, mainly, it is believed, to facilitate logging through deregulation. (italics original, Roy and Gain, 1999:22).

Dependency on funds is another reason that leaves BRAC with little or no flexibility in the decision making process. BRAC's dependence on EC's funds is manifested in regular half yearly progress reports to the FSU. The Food Security Unit decided to 'experiment' with cash-for-work program in around 1997 and at that time came to them with a proposal for a SF program. The European Union's FSU liked the idea because they thought it might very well fit into the food security program through short term monthly wage to the women beneficiaries (interview with the Director, FSU, 1999). Therefore, BRAC's management carries out the financial operations but the Food Security Unit takes the financial decisions. Thus, when the women demanded and the BRAC workers felt that the duration of monthly wage should be increased, the Food Security Unit rejected the idea. The implied reason for this rejection is very simple: the EU is more interested in delivering cash wage to the women beneficiaries through BRAC than BRAC's SF program itself. As long as the distribution of cash money to the poor women is regular and safe, the SF program is doing well, according to the EU. Sustainable forestry Bangladesh is not really in the EC's agenda.

Land Tenure Arrangements: Is it safe?

BRAC works within the existing vulnerable and uncertain land tenure system in Bangladesh that is possibly the biggest hindrance to its sustainable forestry efforts. And the organization knows it very well.

With increasing population and alarming pressure on land, land has become the most valuable and scarce commodity in Bangladesh. In rural areas, there is no land left for forestation, and with the fragmentation of land due to the increased number of members in the families, land for agriculture has become extremely inadequate. The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has some land, which, BRAC thinks, should be distributed among the poor for forestation. The organization is engaged in the process of leasing land from the GOB and then leasing it out to the poor in rural in areas for a long-term period. However, the amount of land that BRAC has leased from the GOB is so scanty that it has to

look for land from other sources. As said before, these sources include the rich peasants who have some extra land for leasing, and the absentee landowners that do not use all of their land for agricultural purposes. In fact, BRAC is trying to get land for SF from any source possible. BRAC did not receive any land from the Forest Department, which has plenty of land at its disposal, which they do not use for tree planting. Because of the professional rivalry between the NGOs and the government agencies, one doubts whether there is any possibility at all to be engaged in forestry program jointly by the Forest Department and the NGOs.

The BRAC officials admitted that the SF program is not backed by any legal land tenure arrangements. There are no clearly defined tree ownership rights on public lands (roadside, embankments etc.). Outside the government forests, trees are grown on the sides of railroads, embankments, roadsides, canals, and on lands owned by public institutions such as schools and public health service institutions. The legal ownership of these lands and the produce grown on them are not backed by any land and tree ownership policy (ADB 1993). Therefore, during harvest it may become a confusing and hopeless situation for the poor in particular. A Regional Manager of BRAC noted that when the trees are grown on the roadsides, they look so beautiful that the government may not allow them to cut them which have happened before in some areas in Bangladesh. In the cases of the land that BRAC leases from the third party, a tripartite agreement is to be signed by all parties involved—the party that is leasing the land, BRAC, and the women participants. When BRAC leases roadside stripes of land from the Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) of GOB, it signs an agreement detailing the terms and conditions, the sharing of profit with that agency and again with participating poor women. In reality, what usually happens is that the agreement is done between LGRD and BRAC very informally, sometimes with no written documents and supported by only verbal agreement (Interview with RM, 1999). Moreover, no agreement is signed between the actual owner (government agency) and the women members. The legal basis that gives the women usufractory rights on these lands is the agreement between them and BRAC. It means that if anything happens between the government agency and BRAC that leads to the cancellation of that agreement, the poor women have nothing to do with that at all.

Even when the agreement is signed between the women participants and BRAC, the women are not given a copy of the agreement. The women just sign the agreement because they cannot read or write. Before the agreement is signed BRAC officials explain the terms and conditions of the agreement verbally even though the women understand very little. A few years have gone by since the SF program was commenced by BRAC, but the women do not have any written documentation of their rights to the land. The BRAC officials argued that 'they are safely protected in office files' and may be extracted whenever needed. Given the trust that BRAC has been able to build among the poor women in rural Bangladesh, an RSS (social forestry, Head Office) comments:

> BRAC hands over the leased land to the women in a different way. We give them land with precise rules and regulations that are stamped and

> registered. So, even if we do not give them any copy of the agreement, it's okay. We cannot come after five years and evict them from the land.

Maybe BRAC will not claim the land but some other party may. Land feuds are the most common practice in Bangladesh given the value and scarcity of that commodity. The RSS admits that the agreement between the NGOs and the government agency regarding land is highly vulnerable. When BRAC leases land from rural peasant, the same thing happens. For the peasant, there is no written copy of the agreement as well. Knowing very well the complex nature of land rights in Bangladesh, one peasant (who leased some land to BRAC for SF) says:

> I did not get any copy of the leasing agreement. I requested that. The BRAC official who approached me first for the land said that BRAC would give me a document. They have not yet. If I die before the leasing period ends (in this particular case, it is twelve years) and my sons claim the land from the women who have grown trees on the land, what will happen? What will BRAC do in this type of situation?

This fear indicates the vulnerability of the land registration system in Bangladesh. Three different offices are given authority to produce legal documents of land rights at the same time. Therefore, in the absence of strong land laws or even legal documents of land use rights, when the trees will grow, there is possibility of conflict between the original owner of the land, and the present user (the BRAC beneficiaries). In the presence of a faulty land administration system, any party can go and collect legal documents of land ownership from any of the three offices: Tahshil, Registrar's, and the Settlement office.[52] Apparently, BRAC has not yet taken any strong legal step to protect the rights of the women beneficiaries on the land and its produce.

An inquiry into BRAC's Social Forestry program perhaps validates the critics of BRAC as an organization. The organization has moved away from its rhetorics of goals and objectives of and public participation in the SF program. Poverty alleviation is just the common, overarching goal of its manifold development programs; for the SF program, the strategies used by BRAC do not properly show how the poverty of the rural women could be alleviated. The major goal, improvement of the environment by planting trees, is weak since the rural women know little about it. The trees that are being planted by BRAC have often been proven to have negative effects on the environment in many parts of the world. However, that does not necessarily mean that they will have similar impacts on the BRAC's lands. But further research is needed in this area by its Research and Evaluation Division that seems absent at the present time. The women participate in a program which is mostly pre-designed and consequently, not much to say in the decision-making process. Even the lower and middle level

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[52] Unfortunately, due to massive corruption, bribery is almost a common practice in Bangladesh. Getting false legal documents from the government offices regarding land ownership is not at all difficult.

management do not take any substantive decisions; they act as technical managers of the program. Because the program depends on foreign funds, BRAC has to be accountable to the European Union's Food Security Unit in terms of its financial expenditures. The donor is found to be not too concerned about the sustainable forestry program itself as much as they are about the spending nature of their funds. As the organization is more focused on horizontal expansion of its SF program (like any of its other programs), many divisions are created to carry on routine duties and thus, Lovell's claim that the organization has "flat" and "organic" structure fall short here. The organization is especially deficient in creating collaborative arrangements with the government and its relevant forestry agencies. This potentially delimits BRAC's chances to receive land from the Forest Department and therefore, may jeopardize the program because there is overall scarcity of land in Bangladesh. In short, with all these weaknesses, can the Social Forestry program of BRAC be called a sustainable one? An organizational analysis (though partial) will help, hopefully, to understand the existing gaps between the theory and practice in BRAC's SF program. This analysis is done in later sections.

The major limitation of this study is its 'smallness'—the smallness of the number of people who were interviewed from the organization and outside it, the women members and also, is small in terms of its focus on only two areas of BRAC's many forestry programs. Keeping these limitations in mind, it may not fair to be too critical about the SF program as it sounds like now. Rather, a further analysis based on its two major goals—participation and sustainability may expose different dimensions of this program.

CHAPTER 5

Canada's Model Forest Program: Local Response to Global Problem

In June 1992 at the Rio Summit on global environmental degradation, it was acknowledged by the world leaders that sustainable forestry practice is the principal vehicle to achieve sustainable development in both developing and developed nations. Canada, being the owner of 10 percent of world's forests, presented the Forest Principles for sustainable forestry. The Principles are supposed to build the platform for sustainable management, and conservation of all forests, and they were signed by all the delegates present (CFS 1999).

If interpreted by the Agenda 21 developed in Rio Summit, Canadian forest communities had already developed a National Forest Strategy and a Canadian Forest Accord by March 1992. However, none of these policies seemed to be useful for micro-level forestry situations in Canada, as they were developed to address the macro-level forest management practices in general. To avoid top-down management and advocacy, therefore, the next step was to find out a process whereby all the forest stakeholders in a particular forest community could take part in the decision making process to steer the sustainable forest management in that area. The philosophy was to bring all the diverse groups of forest stakeholders under one common agenda—save the forests from depletion. Previously, the different forest users—the forest dwellers, saw mill owner, forest researcher, the industry etc.—were using the forests independent of each other and thus, were never able to put all of the pieces of the puzzle of sustainable forestry together. The Canadian Forest Service wanted to see these different groups in a 'neutral forum' or 'roundtable' where they all would be aware of each other's interests and needs from forests. The Model Forest Program was initiated in September 1991 by the CFS with establishment of Model Forest Secretariat in Ottawa. Consequently, proposals were sought from all over Canada by the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) and eventually fifty proposals came in. Finally, the Model Forest Program was launched in 1992 under "Partners in Sustainable Development of Canada's Green Plan (Sinclair et al. 1998)."[53]

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[53] Among 50 proposals, 10 were initially chosen by CFS to set up Model Forest Program in ten regions in Canada which are different from each other in terms of land tenure arrangements, socio-economic conditions, and forests (CFS 1999). Later on in 1997, another MFP was launched under the stewardship of First Nations peoples (CFS 1999). Following Canada, a number of countries became interested in a model forest program. Currently, Chile, Japan, Mexico, Russia, US, Argentina, Australia, China, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, UK, and Vietnam are at different stages of establishing model forests in their respective countries. CFS supports the International Model Forest Program through the technical cooperation from Natural Resources Canada, Canadian International Development Agency, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and the International Development Research Centre. Administered by a secretariat in Ottawa, it envisages providing technical and organizational support to any country interested in setting up model forests. The CFS intends to organize international forum, seminar and meetings between the international model forest programs in order to develop truly global model of sustainable forest management (CFS 1999:5).

What is, then, a Model Forest?[54] A MF is a *place where the principles of sustainable forest management are generated, tested in the field, and the results are shared nationally and also internationally.* Each model forest is operated by a not-for-profit organization and funded, mostly, by the federal government through the CFS. Most of the positions are voluntary except for a small administrative staff. The people involved with the direct management of the organization donate their time and expertise and also, bring additional financial support to the program (CFS 1999:3). The Canadian Forest Service has developed 9 key points to understand the concept of Model Forest Program (MFP) properly:

1) it has general approval and support of the participating landowners and land managers;
2) it is managed by a partnership that is broadly representative of interests in the forest area and is organized to consider the views of interested parties;
3) its management objectives consider a full range of social, economic, and environmental values in an integrated approach to resource management;
4) its land base must be of working scale and size;
5) its participants support the utilization of ecologically sound forest practices and support research and development on key issues related to Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) including indicators of SFM;
6) the organization supports education and public awareness;
7) its activities should include the transfer of forest technology and knowledge to other areas outside the model forest;
8) it is an active part of the National Model Forest Network and shares experiences, successes, and failures with other Model Forests;
9) it is able to define, measure, and inform others about indicators of SFM that are relevant to their circumstances and to the principle of sustainable development (1996:10).

The 'partners' involved in each model forest program are the heart and soul of the program. Not only do they bring forest related diverse social, economic, and environmental dynamics to the table, but they always try to achieve unanimous decision as to how to guide the forest management to achieve sustainability (CFS 1996; 1999). The "model" is not the program itself, rather the *shared decision making process* that integrates diverse wide ranging interests—logging, aboriginal values, small business, parks, environment etc.—toward the common goal of constructing approaches to sustainable forest management. No single interest dominates over the other; the model forest is also the learning ground for social coherence and mutual acceptability.
A model forest has, theoretically, no jurisdiction over land, i.e., it does not have any land of its own. But the program strongly encourages the agencies with land ownership or stewardship to join the MFP. The objective is to use these lands as a "testing ground" and to develop indicators of sustainable forest management that the landowners or tree owners can use in their own forest management practice.

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[54] The proceeding section draws significantly on CFS (1999).

The Model Forest Program in Canada has been beginning to develop itself as a platform to create opportunities for social, economic, and political service delivery to different stakeholders. The themes of sustainable forest management (SFM) and aboriginal Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) have become two major agenda items in Phase II operation of the MFPs in Canada. However, sustainable forest management has been narrowed down to 'local level indicators' of SFM. The purpose is to help address the situation-specific socio-economic, cultural, and environmental conditions in different forest regions of Canada. The inclusion of aboriginal TEK in the forest management practice is to bring the non-aboriginal and aboriginal forest practices together to achieve most efficient forest management. From this fusion of TEK and modern, scientific forest management knowledge, the aboriginal people are expected to gain both economically (eco-tourism, non-timber forest products etc.) and politically (increased involvement in the forest management decision making process) (CFS 1999, Pp. 7-8).

The underlying philosophy of the MFP is to build the partnerships among diverse and very often, conflicting forest stakeholders. The partners will decide, act, and prosper together—*collectively*. In the whole process of mutual respect and commitment, the MF organization will act as a catalyst. With substantial financial support from the federal government and additional funds from the partners, the partners feel confident they will achieve the goal of SFM together:

> Knowledge, an open forum, a fair decision-making process, and financial and administrative resources are not the whole story, however. The underlying attraction and strength of the model forests is, in fact, the sheer goodwill of those who work in them. It is the partners' unwillingness to leave the concerns of others unresolved, combined with their determination to make their model forest work, that not only sustained the experiment through its rocky start-up, but also keeps the partners committed to dealing with new challenges as they arise (CFS 1999:10).

Long Beach Model Forest Program: Making the Communities Visible

The Long Beach Model Forest Society is one of Canada's Model Forest Programs. It is situated in Ucluelet, British Columbia and run on not-for-profit basis. The program covers 400,00 ha of land stretched between Clayoquot Sound and Barkley Sound. In this region, the First Nation population is pretty dense with approximately 4000 people represented by six traditional territories—Ahousaht, Hesquiaht, Tha-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, Ucluelet, and Tseshaht (Long Beach Model Forest, undated). The LBMFS could not start its operation formally before September 1994 although the Model Forest Program was launched by CFS in 1992. In September 1994, the Society reached the Model Forest Agreement with the Provincial government of BC and the Federal government of Canada to designate the Electoral Area "C", Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot, as the model forest. At that time the LBMFS joined the national and international network of model forests (Pitt-Brooke 1995).

The delay in formal functioning of the LBMFS was due to various structural, legal, and political changes that occurred between 1992 and 1994 in British Columbia in general and Clayoquot Sound in particular. Some events during this time added to the already complicated political, legal, and economic situations in Clayoquot Sound and BC. For example, full representation of all the communities concerned in that area needed to be ensured. The Province of British Columbia asked not to start the activities until the completion of its Clayoquot Sound Land Use Decision in April, 1993.[55] The interim Board of Directors of the LBMFS wanted to see full participation by the FNs at the negotiation table that was affected by the Interim Measures Agreement for Clayoquot Sound that time.[56] One of the major reasons for the delay to start operation is that the LBMFS that it did not have any General Manager for a considerable period of time to initiate major activities (LBMFS 1998:4).

Organizational Structure of LBMFS: An Evolutionary Process

Since its inception, the Long Beach Model Forest Society has undergone many changes and adjustments in its organizational structure. This is mostly because of the operating environment which is very complicated and constantly changing. It has, therefore, not been easy to have one static organizational structure that could handle all these changes.

The Long Beach Model Forest Society involves many organizations, groups, and communities within Electoral Area "C". In total, there are eight communities in the LBMF area: Hot Springs, Ahousaht, Opitsaht, Tofino, Esowista, Ucluelet, Port Alberni, and Ittatsoo. From the beginning, diverse interests like professional organizations, NGOs, First Nations, industry, private landowners, universities, colleges, schools, all levels of government and international organizations have been represented in the LBMFS through respective 'sector'. A Board of Directors typically governed the activities of the LBMFS. The sector members nominated the Directors from each sector.[57] The

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[55] The Land Use Decision was made by the Province of BC to resolve the conflict between the logging companies and the environmentalists. According to the Decision, new parks were to be created in Clayoquot Land where the First Nations found themselves completely left out in the decision making process (Nixon 1997).

[56] The Interim Measures Agreement was signed after prolonged negotiations between the Hereditary Chiefs and Councilors of five First Nation tribes of the Clayoquot Sound region and the provincial government of BC during December, 1993. The agreement enabled the First Nations to govern resource use until a comprehensive treaty is signed between the FN and the BC government. The land use governance would be possible through a Central Region Board that consists of five FN representatives under Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council and five non-aboriginal people different forest stakeholders (Nixon 1997).

[57] During the first phase of the LBMF program, fourteen sectors had many groups under each sector. The Youth sector represented the young people from all aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities, the Education sector was comprised of University of Victoria, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, North Island College, and School District no. 70. The Labor sector was formed of Alberni and District Labor Council, etc. The First Nations sector represented five FNs communities under Nuu-Cha-Nulth Tribal Council, Government of Canada had representation through the Parks Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Department of Natural Resources, Provincial Government had representatives from the Ministry of Forests,

current Directors serve at the Board until the general annual meeting of the LBMFS. At the general meeting sector members of each sector decide again on Director and Alternate to represent their communities in the next year again. Initially, there were fourteen sectors at the Board. These sectors worked under six broad themes: Cultural Values (e.g. heritage and socio-economic), Ecological Research and Restoration, Resource Data and Maps for Communities, Demonstration an Interpretation, Public Information Related to Sustainability, and Youth Leadership.

Usually, fourteen major sectors represented eight communities and their concerns in the Board. The youth sector, Education, Labor, First Nations, Government of Canada, Government of British Columbia, local Municipal Government, Conservation Science, Major Manufacturers and Managers, Secondary Industry Value Added, Tourism, Fisheries, Social and Economic Sustainability and Outdoor Recreation send one director from each sector to the Board. Any Director at the Board represents the interests of the community he/she is coming from. The Director is to make sure that the interests and demands of all groups within the same sector are properly placed in the negotiation table. Each sector has a Director and an Alternate. The Sectors do not represent any individual or any single organization, rather they are a collectivity of several groups and organizations. Within each sector, the members constitute a Working Group that represents the interests of that sector after having extensive discussion with the sector members at large.

Until 1995-96, the LBMFS was administered by a small number of staff who were paid by the federal government. On top of the staff management, there was the General Manager. There were six coordinators for six categories working under the General Manager. The Annual Report of the LBMFS for the period 1996-97 came up with the first detailed organizational chart and also with some changes in the management. The position of the Assistant General Manager was created and assigned some of the offices previously under the GM's jurisdiction (See Figure 3). Some changes in administration were again made during 1997-98. The positions for the First Nations Liaison Coordinator and the Research, Education, and Training Coordinator were abolished. Also, an Information Systems Coordinator replaced the Geographic Information Coordinator.

Recently, the LBMFS has undergone some more changes in its structure as agreed in its Board of Directors meeting in March, 1998. The purpose was to bring in evolutionary changes to cope with ever changing environment in the LBMF areas and ensure stronger "responsibility, accountability and

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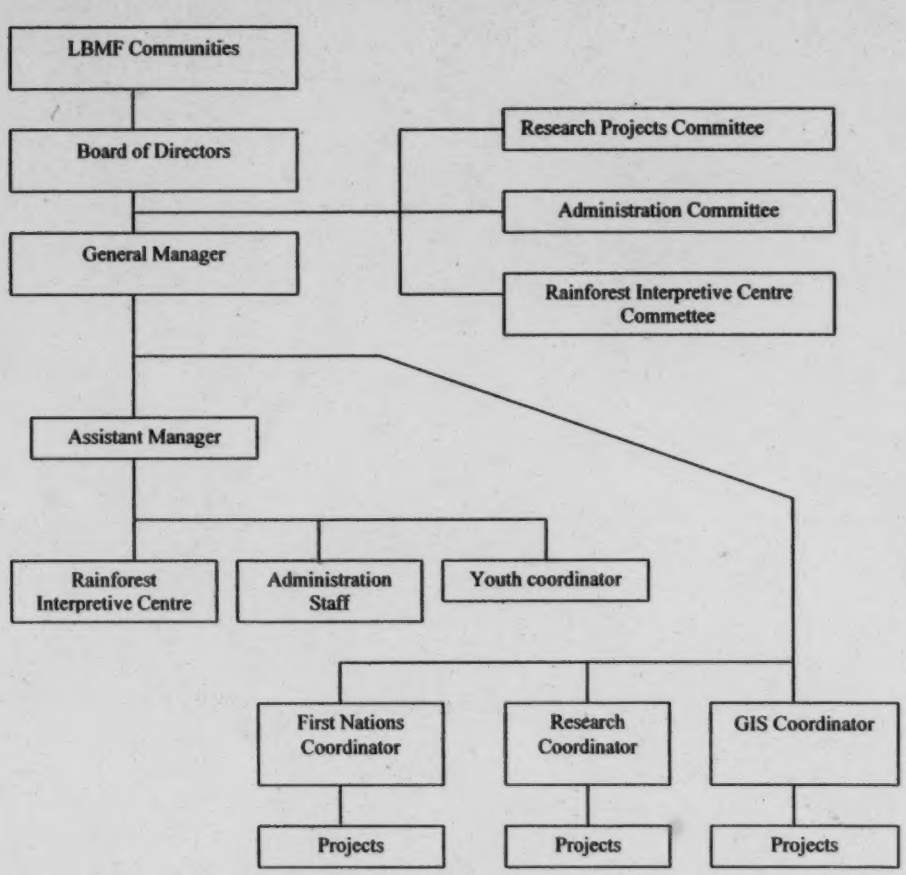
Economic Development, Aboriginal Affairs, Energy etc. The Municipal Government sector represented the Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot, the City of Port Alberni, the Villages of Ucluelet and Tofino. The Alberni Environmental Coalition, and Sierra Club were represented through the Conservation Science sector. Besides them, the Major Manufacturers sector involved the forest industries, Secondary Industry, Value Added sector had Woodlot Association, Small Forest Products Manufacturers and some other groups. The Tourism sector consisted of the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Council of Vancouver Island etc., the Fisheries sector involved both aboriginal and non-aboriginal fishing interest groups, Social and Economic Sustainability sector represented both social and economic interest groups and the Outdoor Recreation sector involved the BC Recreation Council, Wildlife Federation, etc.

Figure 3. The organizational structure of Long Beach Model Forest Society, 1996-97



Reproduced with modification from LBMFS (1997).

communications at all levels of the organization" (LBMFS 1998:16). The new structure (see Figure 4) is *partner-based* replacing the old *sector-based* representation. Consequently, the numbers of partners has increased from fourteen to seventeen. Now, each partner in any one sector will send one representative to the Board that will meet quarterly and one of the meetings will be its Annual General Meeting. For the first time, it was also decided that a President who will be elected from within the Board of Directors would chair the Board meetings and the Administration Committee meetings. The nominations for the Administration Committee also are sought within the Board of Directors. Through election, the Directors elect a five-member Administration Committee. The CFS has an ex-officio, non-voting seat on this committee.

The Advisory Committee represents people from the First Nations, Provincial and Federal governments, forest industries and the scientific community and is supposed to assist the Board and the Administration Committee in different programs. The Working Groups are now involved in the formal representation of different stakeholders together and are assigned different projects for successful implementation. The Working Groups are directly accountable to the Administration Committee.

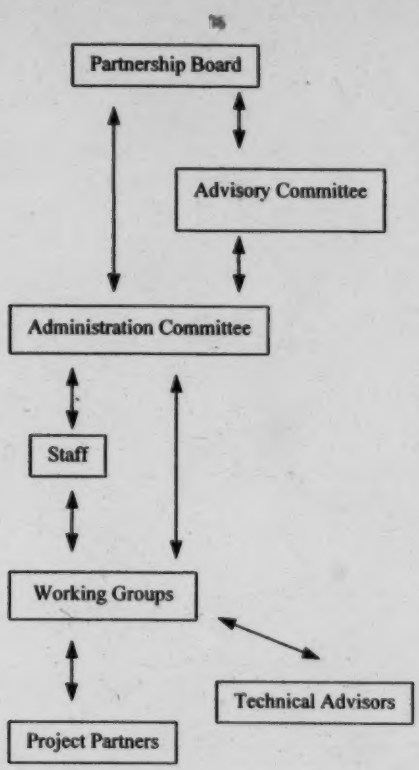
Under this new organizational structure, with a partner-based decision making process, 100 percent consensus is no longer a prerequisite to make a decision about a particular issue on the Board. The Partners will try to reach consensus, but if they fail then the decision will be taken on a "super-majority" basis. This has been copied from the Fundy Model Forest Program. However, the Directors from each partner group will follow the same process as was used in sector-based structure.

LBMFS—Federal /Provincial Governments Relationships

Both the Federal and the Provincial Governments are to play a pivotal role in the LBMF program. The Federal Government is the initiator of the Model Forest Program and the Provincial Government of British Columbia bears, under the Canadian Constitution, the responsibility of forest management in the province. The Provincial Government of British Columbia has the authority to regulate, standardize, and allocate harvesting rights through a set of legal rules and acts (for example, Ministry of Forests Act, Forests Act, and Commissioner on Resources and Environment Act). It also distributes management responsibilities and as the coordinator, organizes and coordinates different integrated resource management planning in the province. On the other hand, the Federal Government, through the Department of Forestry Act, encourages the Ministry of Forests to cooperate with the provinces and also the non-government organizations for better management of forest resources. It is the Federal Government who has the financial, technical, and diplomatic resources that are provided, if necessary, to different forest oriented agencies (including the provinces) for scientific and technological enhancement of forest management and implementing the forest codes in different forest regions of Canada. The Province of British Columbia and the Federal Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 1993 regarding Canada's Model Forest Program. They also agreed to cooperate with each other to carry out the goals and objectives of Long Beach Model Forest Program without interfering in existing land tenure and jurisdictional mandates. That agreement also marked the importance of a 'tripartite' agreement of cooperation between the Provincial Government, Federal Government and the Long Beach Model Forest Society.

Apart from being the initiator of the Model Forest Program and hence, the initiator of Long Beach Model Forest Program, the Federal Government enjoys a special position in the LBMFS as the major provider of the funds. The Canadian Forest Service (CFS) provides the base funds every year that are renewable in every five years. Also, the CFS is supposed to provide additional support to any

Figure 4. Organizational structure of LBMFS, 1998 (Source: LBMFS 1998)



Model Forest Program if the situation demands (CFS 1996). However, the Federal Government expects the Long Beach or any model forest to contribute at least a standardized portion of the total expenditures each year that should be collected from the partners. This latter contribution is supposed to be spending in achieving directly the goals and objectives of the LBMFS. As the major donor, the Federal Government reviews the Long Beach Model Forest Program in order to see whether to continue with the funding or not. The Long Beach Model Forest Society is required to submit an annual report to the Minister of Natural Resources at the end of every fiscal year. Besides, LBMFS is required to prepare the Annual Work Plans that will contain a detailed description of the estimated budget for each fiscal year and would be sent to the Canadian Forest Service for approval. On CFS's requests, LBMFS prepares an information supplement that contains the land base of the LBMF area, information on its organizational structure, Board of Directors, administration staff, Advisory Committee, Working Groups, clear description of role and responsibilities of the Board, commitment from local landowners, partners and land managers to be involved in the program and information on funding sources and funding allocations according to the objectives of the Society and its activities (LBMFS 1998:21-22). The CFS usually

provides the LBMFS base funding of $500,000 for every two-year period. However, besides the CFS funds, the LBMFS receives funds from the partners of the Board of Directors to carry out different projects (LBMFS 1998). The federal government also closely monitors the activities of the organization with an ex-officio position in the Society's Administration Committee.

Goals and Objectives of LBMFS: Creating a 'model' for Sustainable Forest Management

Since it's beginning, the goals and objectives of LBMFS have never been static. Again, due to the complexities of the working environment in the LBMF area, LBMFS made and remade its goals and objectives in order to fit the changing eco-political scenario. When the Regional District of Alberni-Clayoquot and the Clayoquot Sound Sustainable Development Strategy Steering Committee first proposed to the CFS for a Model Forest Program in the Long Beach area in 1992, three goals were envisioned to achieve by the MFP. These goals were a combination of a (a) "planning framework" to evaluate the schemes of forest resource management in the Long Beach area, (b) demonstrating nationally and internationally the best sustainable forest practices using advanced scientific technology and (c) using a scientific information system to incorporate non-timber resource into integrated forest management (LBMFS 1998:3). However, changes in the socio-political scenario in the LBMF area (Clayoquot and Barkley Sound) during 1993-94 influenced the LBMFS to modify its goals and objectives.[58] Consequently, in the contribution agreement between CFS and LBMFS for Phase I, the latter decided to work toward achieving one broader goal:[59]

> Foster the sustainable use of all forest resources, using cooperative, joint problem solving processes which involve all who value the use of the forests, and which integrate social, environmental, economic, and cultural values in the activities of the Long Beach Model Forest (LBMFS 1998:3).

This broader goal was broken down into several detailed objectives and particularly the First Nations had been given special importance. Thus, the purpose of LBMF would be to sustain timber and non-timber forest values, and

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[58] Several changes were noticed by the consulting firm Gardner Pinfold (which was doing an evaluation of the LBMF program as a part of the overall evaluation of Canada's Model Forest Program initiated by the CFS in 1996). These are the creation of the Central Region Board (CRB) as the main regional multi-group authority to advise the provincial government about the land use decisions in Clayoquot Sound in the LBMF area, the new Forest Practices Code of BC Act that affected the forest practices in Barkley Sound , and the initiation of research and studies to implement the "Scientific Panel" recommendations in Clayoquot Sound (Gardner Pinfold 1996).

[59] It also should be noted that LBMFS undertook numerous projects under seven central themes: heritage values (social, cultural, and economic interactions); sustainability (knowledge and research); forest data, quality and monitoring; demonstration and interpretation; information exchange and sustainability ethics; youth leadership; and Society's business (LBMFS 1996). For each theme, a detailed set of goals and objectives were set by the LBMFS in 1995. For detail description of the goals and objectives of the projects under these seven broad themes, see LBMFS (1996).

develop the techniques for sustainable forest management practice. This would happen by the sharing of forest-knowledge between the First Nations and non-First Nation groups involved in the program. First Nations' Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) would help integrating different environmental, social, economic, and cultural values linked to ecosystem. Using a joint problem solving technique, LBMFS envisioned to create project management models and then disseminating them to both First Nations governments and the forest industries so that they may be applied to "site-specific, ecologically-oriented, scientifically sound management practices for sustainable forest use" (LBMFS Web Site 1998).

A significant shift of goals and objectives may be noticed in LBMFS's initial declaration and the Phase I (1992-97) proposal. Due to the socio-political changes and also through a trial-and-error process, the Board of Directors decided to focus closely on socio-economic issues with special emphasis on the First Nations and *bottom-up* decision-making process involving the communities at the ground level (Gardner Pinfold 1996:23). Timber remained as one of the important issues but not the only one in LBMFS's agenda for sustainable forest management practice. However, during Phase I of its activities, LBMFS could not participate in policy planning of forest resource use in the LBMF area, instead it collected the base line data on biophysical and cultural forest resources combined with different values. It also helped to build linkages between the communities to work toward achieving SFM in the region (LBMFS 1998:4).

For the first time since its beginning, the Board of Directors of LBMFS came up with a broad vision on which to base the new goals and objectives of LBMFS in its February 11, 1998 meeting. The LBMFS's Action Plan for Phase II (1997-2002) saw major changes in terms of goals and objectives of the organization. The vision encompasses the socio-economic, political, and cultural-spiritual aspirations of the members of the Long Beach Model Forest Society:

> Members of the Long Beach Model Forest envision their Model Forest as an area in which sustainable forest management is practiced in such a way as to maintain all of the values inherent in a healthy forest while safeguarding the well-being of communities, including traditional, non-industrial users (LBMFS 1998:24).

The Board of Directors worked out two major goals in the same meeting for the LBMFS to accomplish and these two goals are contingent upon the broader **vision** (LBMFS 1998:24, bold original):

> Goal 1. To raise awareness and demonstrate the commitment of forest users, managers and researchers, at the local, regional, national and international levels, to the concepts of sustainability and integrated resource management as they apply to the whole range of forest values, both intrinsic and instrumental.
> Goal 2. To demonstrate through ecosystem-based forest management how the supply of forest-based, ecological, social, cultural and economic benefits can be maintained.

In order to comply with the objectives of Canada's Model Forest Program set by the Canadian Forest Service, the LBMFS is determined to innovate and demonstrate the "model" for sustainable forest management—locally, nationally, and internationally. While the first goal emphasizes broadly, sustainable forest management practice, the second goal signifies the importance of a demonstration *process* through which sustainability can be achieved. From these two broad goals, flow four objectives that the LBMFS strives to achieve during the Phase II operation. Research, land use, traditional knowledge and development of the indicators of SFM occupy these four objectives:

> Objective 1. Through research, develop a basis to promote the understanding of sustainable forest management and improve the credibility of forest resource management;
> Objective 2. Using a demonstration site, develop and implement a sustainable forest management strategy, including relevant research at the appropriate stand and landscape levels;
> Objective 3. Exchange knowledge, including traditional knowledge, technology and skills, among forest users, resource managers and land owners; and
> Objective 4. Identify and apply local criteria and indicators linked to the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers criteria and the LBMFS's Phase II goals and objectives. (LBMFS 1998:25)

The LBMFS envisions achieving these objectives with partners from First Nations and non-First Nation's groups, communities, forest users, forest managers and researchers. For greater effectiveness, each of the objectives is broken down into specific project oriented goals and objectives. Thus, Objective 1 will be carried out with a goal of reviewing the timber harvesting pattern and forest renewal practices through different projects. Along with this, the prospects of non-timber forest products will be examined with related supply-and-demand market analyses. Under Objective 2, an enterprising effort is being taken by the LBMFS. To demonstrate SFM, it has applied for forestland tenure for the second time. The first proposal was developed through the Government of BC's community forest pilot project but the provincial government rejected it. If the second proposal for a community forestry project is approved by the provincial government then it is expected to be the practical testing ground of SFM for the LBMFS that will combine the timber and non-timber aspects, forest management decision making process and effective management strategies. The knowledge about the criteria and indicators will also be developed from within this pilot project with close monitoring of other model forests in Canada and elsewhere. Objective 3 endorses mass education of SFM through displays and talks on forest values, TEK of the First Nation through its Rainforest Interpretive Center (RIC). Integration of First Nation knowledge of forests has been given special importance here for successful SFM in the LBMF area. Forest tours are organized to view forestry practices by all levels of society, including youth and children. Objective 4 emphasizes

building local level criteria for SFM for implementing the key values outlined by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM) developed in 1995.[60] The LBMFS hopes to develop the indicators and criteria for SFM through its Working Group which is linked to the Model Forest Network Local Level Indicators Working Group (LLIWG) and also with collaboration of Parks Canada at the local and national levels. [61]

Public Participation in LBMF program: A "Dynamic" Process

The philosophy of the Model Forest Program is grounded on the strong belief of mass public participation in the program. The LBMFS is no exception. It encourages participation of all communities, groups, institutions, researchers, forest industries, and any individual interested in developing SFM in the LBMF area. So, who can participate in the Model Forest Program? The LBMFS has a simple answer:

> The short answer is, everybody....The (public) demand is for participation processes that are clearly defined, fair and open, and which review results that will ensure accountability of those responsible for the welfare of forests....All who have an interest in forests, or hold a unique perspective on forests, are entitled to participate. This will result in the creation of a management structure for the Model Forest, which is administered by a Partnership Committee representing a wide range of views about forests. The objective of the participatory process is to empower the parties to a Model Forest Agreement to cooperatively develop and implement a partnership in forest management that integrates environmental, economic, social, and cultural values—to thereby accelerate the implementation of sustainable development in forestry. (LBMFS Web Site 1998).

Participation is facilitated through different projects that are designed to meet the needs of different participating groups. The First Nations, as mentioned earlier, are given special importance in the LBMF program because of their prominence in the LBMF area. Many projects were taken up during the Phase I period that directly affected the First Nations peoples. For example, LBMFS supported and helped the First Nations to carry out inventories and monitoring projects like Hesquiaht First Nation's "Management for a Living Hesquiaht Harbor" project, the Toquaht First Nation's fish counting projects, and the Ahousaht, Tla-qui-aht, Toquaht, and Ucluelet First Nation's cultural inventory and mapping projects (LBMFS 1998). From the beginning of the LBMFS, the First Nation peoples have been involved in the LBMF program through two major projects—the Rainforest Interpretive Centre (RIC) and the Geographic Information

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[60] The key values identified by the CCFM in SFM are: conserving biological diversity, maintaining ecosystem condition and productivity, conserving soil and water resources, maintaining global ecological cycles, maintaining multiple benefits of forests to society and accepting society's responsibility for sustainable development.

[61] For detail description of the projects under each objective, see LBMFS (1998).

System (GIS). During Phase I, LBMFS researchers together with the RIC staff collaborated with the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council[62] and Bamfield Marine Station and developed and later successfully operational zed the Haa-huup-cu-mis Summer Science camp (1996) for First Nation and Non-First Nation youth. Besides, First Nation communities are able to share their TEK with different communities through seminars, workshops, talks, and lectures. So far the Rainforest Interpretive Centre has proved to be an excellent mechanism that provides a continuing and growing interface between the First Nation communities and the non-First Nation people (LBMFS 1998).

The GIS has been an effective mechanism, which helps the First Nation communities to digitize their cultural, historical, and resource data. LBMFS assisted the First Nations communities to set up the software and hardware systems for GIS during Phase I. First Nation youth participated in the GIS training programs arranged by the LBMFS to learn system operations, data maintenance, informational analysis etc. (LBMFS 1998). Trained, these youth have developed very active GIS systems in their communities and have trained other young people within the First Nation communities. Some important outcomes of GIS program have been to incorporate TEK of the elders in the system and exploring the possibility of using GIS in the fish and forest resource management in some First Nation communities (LBMFS 1996). Also, using GIS, community mapping and documentation of cultural sites have been carried out by the First Nations (LBMFS 1996, 1998).

Significant participation of the First Nations youth is also noticed in the LBMF's Community Internship Program (CIP). Since the functioning of LBMFS in 1995, 68 internship positions have been occupied by the members of the First Nations. The most significant involvement of all First Nations under Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council is expected in the recent TEK Working Group 1999/2001 project: "The Meaning and Practice of *Hahuulhi*-the Traditional System of Ownership and Resource Management of the Nuu-chah-nulth People- and its Applications for Sustainable Forest Management" (LBMFS 2000).[63]

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[62] The Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council was first incorporated as the West Coast District Society of Indian Chiefs, on August 14, 1973. The new name was adopted on April 2, 1979. The goals and objectives of this association (that represents approximately 6600 registered First Nations members with the Headquarter in Port Alberni) are to promote: "Healthy families and communities aware of both individual and collective roles and responsibilities; leading healthy and prosperous lives for the all the future; determining our own identity; and living as self-sufficient, self-governing Nations." (extracted from LBMFS undated).

[63] *Hahuulhi,* which means "private ownership" in English, refers to the control and resource use by the hereditary First Nations chiefs in the Clayoquot Sound. "*Ha hoolthe* [*hahuulhi*]...indicates...that the hereditary chiefs have the responsibility to take care of the forests, the land and the sea within his *ha hoolthe* and a responsibility to take care of his ***mus chum*** or tribal members" (Haiyupis 1992:1, quoted in Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel 1995, p.9). The concept of Hahuulhi is viewed so important by the Scientific Panel because it embodies Nuu-chah-nulth belief in sustainable resource use; land and water management of these people. Overall, this concept reflects the TEK of the First Nations people in Clayoquot Sound which provides a framework for co-management of these resources with other non-First Nations groups or communities for a longer period of time (Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel 1995, p.10). For a detailed list of First Nations projects taken by the LBMFS, see LBMFS (2000).

Participation may be wide open, but the decision-making is not. The ultimate responsibility for taking the decisions regarding the projects' approval and implementation in LBMFS rests with the Board of Directors. The Directors, appointed by their respective communities, take decisions that reflect the wishes of their communities. Until recently, LBMFS had used a 'shared decision making' process:

> Shared decision making means that on a certain set of issues, for a defined period of time, those with the authority to make a decision and those who will be affected by that decision are empowered to jointly seek an outcome that accommodates rather than neglects the interests of all concerned. Decision-making shifts to a negotiating team and when agreement is reached, it is expected that the decisions will be implemented. (LBMFS Web Site 1998)

Before any Board meeting, background information on the issue in question is provided to the directors by the LBMFS staff.[64] Then the issues are presented at the Board meeting. The issues are discussed. A Motion is made when a decision point is reached. The Motions are put forward and seconded and the Board members are asked if there is need for a discussion. Discussion may or may not follow. Then the President asks whether it is time for a vote in next few minutes. Voting is done by a show of hands. The President asks if any one opposes the decision. If there is opposition from any one, he is asked to explain the reason and the Board tries to change the motion to change his vote. Thus, eventually a consensus is reached through discussion and compromise.

The voting system was being introduced by the LBMFS in 1998 on an experimental basis following the example of the Fundy Model Forest. The LBMFS will still continue to seek consensus among its partners on the Board, but when consensus cannot be achieved, the issue will be put to a vote. Each partner on the Board (representing different groups, communities, institution etc.) has one vote. Super-majority consensus or votes will determine the particular issue in question. However, the LBMFS hopes not to use this decision making process very often although it may be used rarely.[65]

With a new organizational structure and decision-making process, the First Nations seem to be in stronger positions in the Board than before. There are *seventeen* seats on the LBMFS Board of Directors with First Nations representing either communities or forest companies in seven of them.[66] On the previous Board

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[64] This part entirely draws on Sinclair et al. (1998:11).

[65] Earlier, LBMFS always discouraged a voting procedure in the decision making because "majority consensus" (which is the same as "super-majority" decision used now) can not be a part of a shared decision making process (LBMFS Web Site 1998).

[66] These seats are: Ahousaht Woodlot , HSAAK Forest Resources, LBMF members at large, MaMook Development Corporation, Nuu-Chah-Nulth Cen'tral Regional Chiefs, Toquaht Forest License and Ucluelet First Nations. Other non-First Nation representations are: Alberni Clayoquot Regional District, BC Ministry of Forests, Canadian Forest Service, International Forest Products LTD, LBMF Members at Large, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, University of Victoria, West

of Directors, there were fourteen major sectors with First Nation having only one direct represented (Nuu-Chah-Nulth Central Region Chiefs).

The LBMFS Board of Directors may take the decisions but the members of the communities, groups, and institutions they are representing on the Board have, theoretically, their voices represented. The Directors are to communicate with their respective sector members on a regular basis with a "system of communications protocols" (LBMFS 1998:20). During the Phase I operation of the LBMFS, some criteria were developed for each Director to follow. Among many others, "effective listener", "communication facilitator", brings the interests of his/her constituency, "an imaginative problem solving attitude" and importantly, a "good communicator" with his/her own sector are the criteria that LBMFS likes to see in its Directors.[67]

The LBMFS's intention is to bring as many people as possible into the LBMF program to promote wider representation. The organization, as noted, has always encouraged participation of the First Nations and non-First Nations people in different projects since the beginning. With increased awareness about First Nations' TEK and its inclusion in the SFM principles by the Scientific Panel Recommendations in 1995, LBMFS has focused on consultations with Central Region Chiefs, Central Region Board through meetings (LBMFS 1998:20).

Land Tenure Arrangement: Working within Rules

The Model Forest is *not* concerned with any physical area or land (every hectare). Rather the research, activities, projects, and programs that are carried out by the Long Beach Model Forest Society *are* 'models' that may be used locally, nationally, and internationally to demonstrate sustainable forest management.

The area that the LBMFS consists of belongs to different parties. It is one of the important objectives of Canada's Model Forest Program that the land owners, land managers, and communities be brought together so that forest dependent communities may have the opportunity to take part in the forest management process of their very own forests. LBMFS adheres to this principle and brings different landowners, and managers to the table. These include the BC Ministry of Forests, Parks Canada, forest industries which have extensive logging rights in that area (mainly, International Forest Products Ltd. And Weyerhaeuser Canada and previously McMillan Bloedel Ltd.), West Coast value-added Industries, and First Nation forest companies like Ahousaht Woodlot, Iisaak Forest Resources, MaMook Development Corporation and Toquaht Forest License.

The LBMFS can neither change existing jurisdictional arrangements regarding land use, nor does it have the authority to even modify the land use approval processes. It has to operate within the existing framework. The Central Region Board controls the land use decisions in Clayoquot Sound. According to

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Coast value-added Wood Industries and Weyerhaeuser Canada (an American forest company) (LBMFS 2000).

[67] See LBMFS Web Site (1998) to know about its 15 point criteria for the Directors in the Board to be effective negotiator.

the 137 recommendations of the Scientific Panel (1995), the Ministry of Forests of the BC government first reviews the applications by the forest industries regarding logging and then sends it to the CRB. The Central Region Board, by its authority, can change, modify, and accept or reject any application and send it back again to the Ministry of Forests for any action or final approval (LBMFS undated, p.42). In this type of jurisdictional environment (that created a period of protest and unrest by hundreds of people in Clayoquot Sound[68]), LBMFS can pursue land use management activities only when agreed and approved by the partners on the Board and by other relevant tenure holders and agencies in the area (LBMFS Web Site 1998). Although the provincial government rejected the first community forestry proposal, the LBMFS was working on a second proposal for the demonstration land during the second phase of the fieldwork in Ucluelet.

Literature Review: Internal and External Observations on LBMFS

Though nascent, the LBMFS has been able to produce reports from within the organization and also has attracted the attention of outside observers. The internal reports consists mostly of the Annual Report that LBMFS submits to the CFS every year for renewal of CFS funding, the Web Site, and the interviews taken by different people for the LBMFS at different times. On the other hand, the external reports are the reviews of different organizations carried out for and by, for the most part, the CFS. Besides, the local newspaper articles, features, etc. on the LBMFS are available for the period of 1995-1997.

Pitt-Brooke carried out a series of interviews of the sector Directors and Alternates of the LBMFS Board during late April through early May of 1995. It seems apparent from the interviews that almost all the sectors wanted to see the LBMFS as a vehicle for promoting sustainable forestry in that region, and an opportunity for economic benefits and employment opportunities for different communities through its projects and programs. The First Nations Director agreed to the ideas of increasing economic and employment opportunities but his stress was on political involvement in the LBMF program:

> First Nations also sees the Long Beach Model Forest Society as an important opportunity to work with other communities and governments. This is apparently a chance to be taken seriously, and to have a say in decision making, which hasn't been the case in other processes (Quoted in Pitt-Brooke 1995:6).

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[68] When in April, 1993 BC government announced its Clayoquot Sound Land Use Decision--forced by a decade of protest by the environmental organizations, it again fuelled a much bigger movement. Three months after its commencement, the Clayoquot Sound Land Use Decision faced tremendous opposition from the Friends of Clayoquot Sound who organized a summer-long blockade against logging by McMillan Bloedel. The result was the arrest of 900 people and consequent recommendations by the Commission on Resources and the Environment (CORE) to the BC provincial government to form the Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel. The objective of this Panel was to review the existing logging standards in Clayoquot Sound, change them, and create logging standards that would be the model of best forest practices in not only Clayoquot Sound, but also in the whole world (LBMFS undated, p.42).

The First Nations Director also hoped to integrate the traditional knowledge of the First Nations people in the sustainable forest management process through meaningful cooperation with other governments, and communities present on the Board. As the sponsor of the LBMF program, the CFS Director was very hopeful of making real contributions to the program in terms of providing technical expertise. He was interested to see the international acceptance of the LBMF program as a model of sustainable use of forest resources. The economy, and employment also were issues of concern for the CFS.

While most of the Directors were very hopeful about the potential of LBMFS to create opportunities for sustainable development in the region, the Director of the Tourism sector was not that happy about public participation in the LBMF program. He acknowledged the need for direct communications with the broader public to spread the message of SFM and hoped that LBMFS would leave some legacy, "....that it doesn't just end with the formal term" (Pitt-Brooke 1995:14). The "extraction" versus "preservation" conflict between the forest industries and the communities, environmental agencies in the Clayoquot Sound, he hoped, would go away if there were successful mediation by the LBMFS.

When Pitt-Brooke undertook these interviews, the LBMFS had just started and was in its formative stage. It is expected that the members of the LBMFS would be very optimistic about the program without bringing any complicated issues in the discussion process. Because of its nascent stage, the issue of First Nation's involvement had not yet emerged as a shared concern for the other sectors. All the sectors, in fact, were more concerned about the "tangible" economic and social benefits that might be accrued from the LBMFS.

The Annual Reports of the LBMFS for the Canadian Forest Service are more of a descriptive nature, rather than analytical. This is understandable because the LBMFS is required to explain all its activities, projects, and expenditures in order to be able to get funds from the CFS for the next year. However, the Annual Reports have always been a good source of information about First Nation projects initiated by the LBMFS and the participation of the First Nation people in that. The Rainforest Interpretive Centre and the Geographic Information System got most attention both of the LBMFS staff, the public and the First Nation people. It is clear from one of the Reports that the First Nations are keenly interested in the processes of public involvement and knowledge sharing among different groups and interests. Thus, the FN believes that LBMFS would be able to bring TEK into the SFM practice (LBMFS 1996:7).[69]

Gardner Pinfold Consulting did the first major external observation of the Model Forest Program in Canada in 1996, i.e., five years after the LBMF program theoretically started its operations. This is an evaluation study of ten Model Forests in Canada (at that time, the total number of MFs was ten without a First

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[69] In his speech, the First Nations Liaison mentioned the importance of LBMFS projects specifically directed to the First Nation people in the LBMF area. He acknowledged LBMFS's recognition of and respect for First Nations knowledge and cultural values. In short, for him First Nations participation in the LBMFS created projects were beneficial to the whole organization and the local forest knowledge base (LBMFS 1996:7).

Nation MFP) including the LBMFS. The study found the MFPs have been instrumental in bringing different forest stakeholders to the table to talk about SFM in their respective areas which was not possible before under the traditional forest management practice. In most cases, MFPs have acted as 'catalyst,' 'vehicle,' 'expeditor,' and 'accelerator' to promote SFM and create awareness among the partners. At the same time they noted that despite positive efforts to build partnerships in the forest management, "little has happened on the ground" regarding the practice of SFM. The fact is, all the Model Forest Programs were able to grasp the meaning of the concept of "Sustainable Forest Management" and tried to elaborate the meaning of it through visions and objectives, but none of them really was able to *define* the concept. Model Forests also have not been successful in convincing the forest companies to operationalize the knowledge they have gained from the former to other aspects of their operations (p.13).

According to Gardner Pinfold, the Model Forests have been, in general, 'inward looking' in communications with people outside the model forest program. It means that the MFPs have spent more time in developing partnerships to carry out projects quickly, rather than building communications with the people of different sectors that the partners represent. At the time of the survey, however, the study saw an increase of awareness among the Model Forest organizations to create more external communications with the people of different communities (p.30).

As far as the decision-making is concerned, Gardner Pinfold was not impressed with the performance of the Model Forests. The Model Forests failed to address the issues of conflict among different partners, instead they focus on 'essential' but less risky topics: "That is, conflicts were avoided or simply not discussed" (p.15). However, depending on the nature of the issues that being dealt with, each Model Forest developed its own conflict resolution mechanism that ranged predominantly from consensus-based decision making to majority voting, and a 'de-facto two tier' management structure. In the latter, an "executive" group of people takes the decisions and the rest, the majority, are the advisors to and/or implementers of the projects. None of the Model Forests had, the study shows, a consciously designed conflict resolution mechanism.

First Nation participation in the MFPS was restricted to only a few Model Forest Programs at the time of the study. The study found significant First Nations input into Long Beach Model Forest Program through, among many others, the projects like GIS related projects.[70] There was an increased awareness among the non-First Nations participants in the Model Forest Programs to include Aboriginal communities and their knowledge, and values in the SFM practice. Gardner and Pinfold did not see significant involvement of the Provincial Governments in the MFPs. As far as the CFS was concerned, they saw an urgent need for more involvement of the Canadian Forest Service other than the principal provider of the Model Forests funds.

This study also brings in the views of environmental groups on the feasibility of the Canadian Forest Program. If the Model Forest Program is

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[70] Six Model Forests involved First Nations during this study. These are, Long Beach, McGregor, Prince Albert, Manitoba, Lake Abitibi and Eastern Ontario.

portrayed as a substitute for traditional, environmentally harmful practices of forest management carried out by the forest companies, then, according to the environmental groups, it is a mistake. The Model Forest Program does not display sustainable forestry nor does it have any influence on the forest companies, the study says. Rather these groups view the MFP as "a "make work" public relations project that focuses on mapping and inventorying rather than on experimental logging" (p.54). Close alliance with the forest companies and sometimes the latter's dominance in many MFPs' management board led the environmental groups to ask that whether this whole notion of the MFP as put forward by the CFS is anything better than the old forest management practices.

Gardner Pinfold came up with a series of recommendations for improvement in the existing functioning of the MFPs. Among those, the most important seems to be clear goals and objectives to be set by the different Model Forest Programs to promote SFM on the ground level, and building strong, accountable communications process among the project partners and the people they represent. The evaluation study views MFP as an effective mechanism by which both First Nations and non-First Nations groups and communities may be involved in sustainable forestry practice in Canada and in other countries around the world.

There are two important things to remember about this study. First, at the time the study was carried out, it was 1996 and only five years had elapsed for most of the MFPs except the LBMF. For the LBMF it was only one year of full operation. Therefore, the time frame was perhaps not long enough to see any significant changes in forest practice in the areas where the Model Forests were operating (this weakness of the study is, however, admitted by Gardner Pinfold). The second factor that affects the study is its focus on the MFP as a model of sustainable forestry *that should be internationally acceptable through strong networks among the MFPs internally and constant and direct presence of CFS in the program*. That is why the study spends considerable time to find out whether the MFPs in Canada are internationally acceptable and abides by the rules of the Canadian National Forest Strategy and how to develop positive network between the MFPs, nationally. Doing that, it is unable to go deeper into the individual goals and objectives of each Model Forest Program, instead it generalizes about the pros and cons of the goals and objectives of the MFPs. Each region that the MFPs work within has its own socio-economic and eco-political features that affect the whole operation of the Model Forest in question and any attempt to universalize these different situations may jeopardize the strength of the whole study.

Notwithstanding the limitations of the study, Gardner Pinfold's report helps in understanding the situation of Long Beach Model Forest at its infant stage. Particularly, its use of the schematic framework of a self-directed team using the concepts of FORM (Partnership, Board of Directors, Committees), STORM (Values, Conflicts and Agreement), NORM (Trust, Structures, Rules), and PERFORM (Change on the Ground, Achieve Goals for Sustainable Development) is useful to analyze the present situation in LBMFS and other

Model Forests in Canada.[71] Using this framework, the study found the nascent LBMFS just reaching the PERFORM phase after initial wait-and-go situation (p.11).

In the same year as Gardner Pinfold's study, Pierce Lefebvre Consulting (1996) carried out an evaluation study on the Long Beach Model Forest Society. This study found a lot of positive aspects in the LBMFS. According to this, LBMFS has been able to pursue its objectives through relevant projects and different communities. The First Nations in particular, have been involved in its projects increasingly. However, like Gardner Pinfold, this study found tremendous communication gaps between the communities and their representatives on the Board of Directors. Also, lack of focus and planning, obscure objectives, lack of community input, unclear staff responsibilities and inefficiencies of the LBMF Committee and the Board were reported to be primary drawbacks of the LBMFS that could easily jeopardize the very sustainability of the LBMF program (pp. 5-11). While the study recommends the need for improvement in these sectors, it primarily emphasizes the need for alternative fund raising by the LBMFS's management since the Society has principally depended on CFS funds. The alternative funds include the possibility of cooperative project planning involving different government ministries, the forest industries etc. and the community projects where the local communities may be interested to co-fund the projects (p. 17).

During the summer of 1997, Sinclair et al. carried out a more focused survey of the Long Beach Model Forest (Sinclair et al. 1998). This survey was empirically based and used structured interviews with the staff of LBMFS including the General Manager and the members of the Board of Directors. The findings of this survey resembled that of the earlier survey done by Gardner Pinfold. The diverse range of forest stakeholders and the presence of a youth sector (a unique feature of LBMFS) at the Board table impressed Sinclair et al. the most. They also thought the representation of different sectors at the Board was good and found the organization's staff very impressive. Like the previous study, LBMFS's consensus based decision-making process was regarded as "novel" which is "grounded in communication and discussion" (p. 20). The veto power that each sector has to halt a decision is seen by some as very unsatisfactory because sometimes a very crucial and important issue could be "stymied because of one person" (p.13). The First Nations are often cited as the most powerful in the decision making process because of their "status and power" and also because of the treaty process that could change the control of land in Clayoquot Sound in favor of the First Nations. The Conservation sector, Provincial and Federal

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[71] Gardner Pinfold's explanation of this developmental framework of an organization is easy to understand. In the first stage (FORM), different committees, Boards etc. are set up. When it gets to work then, hidden values of different partners, agreements etc. cause STORM or conflict within the organization. The organization tries to mitigate these conflicts and move forward through building trust, develop structures and rules (the NORM phase). When it sets up structures rules the organizations devotes its attention to attain the goals and objectives of sustainable development (PERFORM stage). Gardner and Pinfold argues that it is not a linear framework, instead as the organization goes along, it may need to revisit the NORM stage that again leads to STORM within the organizational structure. For detail, see Gardner and Pinfold (1996:9-11).

Government sectors are also deemed as powerful in the Board because of their respective authority in environment and land questions, as much as providing funds for the program (p.13-14). Despite being the principal subsidizer of the LBMF program, the Federal Government had been "persuasive" in making the program a success, rather than "autocratic". However, decision-making had been far from easy for a several reasons. The "bureaucratic" nature of some processes (for example, the GIS project) and the "political" nature of inter-directorial interactions made it very difficult to take decisions on big issues particularly about the First Nations. "With respect to First Nations, frustration emanated from the fact that decision making was stymied and the MF program could not move ahead of impacting on treaty negotiations" (p.22). A major disadvantage that came out of the study regarding the consensual decision making is the time and cumbersome process to reach consensus on any issue that seemed very "prolonged" and "frustrating" (p.12). The consensus based decision making also means, as Sinclair et al. observes, "in achieving compromise, issues are distilled down to their lowest common denominator" (p.iii). The study shows that the LBMFS Board of Directors spends most of its time overcoming the problems of the consensus process, power and personnel hiring (which is the hiring of a General Manager). The latter seems to have affected the efficiency of the whole organization most:

> The most serious conflict dominating the history and development of the LBMF centered on the process of hiring a GM. This conflict permeated the past (i.e., with reference to the appointment of the first GM); plagued the present (i.e., with reference to the termination of the latest GM) and threatened the future (i.e., with reference to hiring a new GM). (p.25)

Among the most cited sources of this conflict are the differences in individual ideologies and personalities, the power struggles that generate from the local environmental versus industrial interests and the Tofino-Ucluelet divide (p.23).

Lack of communication and feedback between the sectors and the LBMF still remained, according to Sinclair et al., a major problem as it was during Gardner Pinfold study. According to Sinclair et al., the information feedback (MF decisions, programs and projects etc.) from the Board representatives to the sectors they represent is poor both in terms of quality and quantity. A need was felt by the respondents to have more direct communications with the First Nation communities (p.46). The study questions the LBMFS's incapacity to influence the policy framework for sustainable forestry in the region. The principal reason is the organization's lack of authority in local land use decisions. The LBMFS is too dependent on its research and education programs to have 'passive' impact on the SFM process although the authors cannot find any strong means for the organization to do that. The Rainforest Interpretive Center is found to be the most effective means of communications and dissemination of the message of sustainable forestry between the LBMFS and the general public. In general, Sinclair et al.'s conclusion is that the LBMFS waits for Scientific Panel to tell

them about the future direction of the SFM when it should be the other way around (p.35).

In terms of sharing of social values between the sectors of the LBMFS, Sinclair et al. found very "scanty" and "limited" identification of inter-sector social values by the respondents. Detailed research into the multi-sectoral values would, the authors believe, lead the LBMFS to have more impact to implement the SFM practice in the region (p.47).

The local newspapers (*Westerly News, Newsgroup* etc.) convey LBMFS's messages of sustainable forestry to the public. These newspapers mostly describe different projects undertaken by the LBMFS to the local reader and inform the public about any workshops, seminars, lectures that are organized by and/or for the organization. According to the local news media, the Rainforest Interpretive Center has been very successful in bringing different forest-based communities together and spreading the message of sustainable forestry to the broader community (LBMF 1996, 1997).

While most of the studies found the Rainforest Interpretive Center as one of the major accomplishments of the LBMFS, an evaluation done by Cindy Hazenboom was hardly pleased with the performance of the RIC. The interim General Manager of the LBMFS appointed her in the spring of 1999 to look into RIC so that some applied forest management research issues could be developed (Schilling 1999). According to Hazenboom, RIC is sort of a "community Centre" rather than an "information Centre" on sustainable forest management" (p.5) that has chosen a "do nothing" (p.13) policy:

> Issues that are perceived as controversial are avoided in an attempt to placate some of the stakeholders. However, avoiding the issues does not facilitate problem solving, nor does it provide people with the knowledge or tools required in implementing change." (Hazenboom 1999:3)

These "issues" involve forest resource management related to regional, national and international situations. This study perceives the RIC as a 'complete failure' to abide by the vision and goals of the Model Forest (p.3) and mentions that the RIC demonstrates mainly First Nations values to please the First Nations. The evaluation describes as the reason for these failures the lack of proper knowledge of the then Coordinator of RIC who "does not feel capable of discussing forestry issues and as a result, limits her discussions and presentations to "safe" topics that she feels comfortable with" (p.5).

In this *Proposal for The Further Development Of The Long Beach Model Forest's Rainforest Interpretive Centre*, Hazenboom suggests some radical changes in the RIC including renaming it as "Long Beach Model Forest Information Centre" (p.5) so that the centre can "Proceed adaptively" (p.3). To adhere to ever changing local and global environmental degradation precipitated by deforestation, RIC as a public information Centre, should, as Hazenboom advises, follow "adaptive management" techniques that "leads to better decisions

and, in the long run better outcomes" (p.11).[72] The report stunned the whole RIC staff including the Program Coordinator. The latter described it as not objective and argued that the evaluation is very biased and unprofessional, charging that it disrespects not only the staff of the RIC, but also the successful projects that have been carried out so far (Craig 1999).

The National Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) organized a workshop on First Nations participation in Canada's Model Forest Program in October 1995 in conjunction with NAFA Aboriginal Forestry Conference "*Lessons in the Making*". Representatives attended the workshop from Aboriginal groups and government officials, mostly from the Canadian Forest Service. There were mixed feelings about the participation of the First Nations or Aboriginal people in the Model Forest Program. Chief Gerry Fontaine was furious about the fake participation of the First Nations in some MFPs. According to him, the MFP does not respect the First Nations values of sustainable forestry; neither does it address the issues of equity of all the stakeholders in forest management. The principal cause of his anger lies in the fact that on all of the Board of Directors, the First Nations are assigned one vote or one voice whereas the non-First Nations have numerous representatives (recreation, industry, fish and game, labor etc.) and have several voices and votes. Although he never disagrees with the concept of the MFP, he views it as a means for the government and forest industries to further exploit the First Nations and neglect the issues of treaty rights. He demands a Model Forest Program that is solely run by the First Nation people, as the First Nations are not a minority shareholder in the forests, rather they are one of the major stakeholders of the forests. Willie Wilson, a member of the Model Forest Evaluation Committee, agrees with Gerry Fontaine but observes that the five-year duration of the MFP set by the CFS (that is to be renewed every year) is too short time for the forests to work on sustainable forestry. Other Aboriginal participants in the workshop view the MFP as something new that gives them the opportunity to be involved in the forest management process. But again, they describe the MFP as multi-partnership program for doing research on sustainable forest management without direct influence to change things on the ground (NAFA 1997a; 1997b).

The National Aboriginal Forestry Association explains the situation of distrust of aboriginal people in the Model Forest Program as a result of historical relationships between the aboriginal people and the provincial and federal governments where the former have always been excluded by the latter from the natural resource decision-making process. The NAFA also states that theoretically the Model Forest Program is a multi-stakeholder approach with all the stakeholders having equal political right to voice their interests. But as the aboriginal people are seen as one interest group as against different non-aboriginal groups with different interests, the aboriginal people have practically become the

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[72] The Proposal in fact provides a long list of what-to-do things to improve the RIC as an information Centre that could include the values and interests of all forest stakeholders, not only the First Nations. The major theme of the Proposal is to bring a 'critical' thinking component in RIC's educational information so that a sustainable forest ecosystem building by all the communities become a reality. For detail listings of the proposed changes, see Hazenboom (1999).

minority in the decision-making process. Not only that, the NAFA argues that the Model Forest Program perpetuates the existing unhealthy, unequal state/First Nations relationships since nothing is changed with respect to jurisdiction over land use decisions. As a result, aboriginal people's hope to access the political power for self-governance is not materialized through the Model Forest Program (NAFA 1996, 1997).

Monica Jäggi (1997) gives a brief but very informative description of the recent issues confronting the aboriginal forest-dependent communities in Canada specifically focusing on Ontario forestry programs. Jäggi views the Model Forest Program as actually a continuation of the Aboriginal Forest Land Management Guidelines and the First Nations Forest Resource Management Act (FRMA) that NAFA proposed as part of the 1992 Aboriginal Forestry Strategy. The Guidelines (Smith et al. 1995) proposed a forest management practice on the Indian reserves that is based on *community forestry* principles: aboriginal people will be the decision-maker, aboriginal knowledge will be incorporated in management plans, and the federal and provincial governments will assist the aboriginal people with funds, and there will be a shift from a top-down forest management system to a bottom-up aboriginal forest management system.[73] FRMA was made as an amendment of the Indian Act. It allowed aboriginal people to use the Treaty Lands according to their choice. These two proposals- the Guidelines and the Act— explains, through incorporating cultural and political features of First Nation people's lives, how the First Nations' philosophy of sustainable forest management differs from that of the federal and the provincial governments. Politically it was unacceptable to the federal government since these forestry proposals are based on government-to-government relationships. Moreover, aboriginal forest management emphasizes a holistic approach to forestry whereas the non-native governments judge forestry from commercial point of view. Because of these contrasting views, the aboriginal proposals were not fully accepted and implemented by the federal government. Instead, the government approved the First Nations Forestry Program in 1996 on the condition that it would be administered by the federal government and controlled by the Canadian Forest Service (p.15).

Jäggi argues that this Program is quite the opposite of what the aboriginal communities wanted it to be. This Program excludes the possibility of full authority in the decision-making process by native people since the administration rests in the hands of the federal government. Like NAFA, Jäggi too is critical about the present political process in the First Nations Forestry Program that is negligent of the interests of the native people. The only advantage in the Program that Jäggi can see is the realization by the federal government that the reserve lands are too small for economic development. The government therefore tries to establish a relationship between the forest industries and the aboriginal people so

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[73] The key issue in the Guidelines is community participation in the forest management process. The communities will have the authority to not only make decisions but also change or amend the ForestLand Management Plan with a community-based monitoring system. While outside assistance is welcome to resolve conflicts between and within communities, in the end decisions will be made by the communities, not the outsiders (Smith et al. 1995: II-2).

that they can work on a basis of mutual respect for each other and the aboriginal people can have access to the treaty lands (p.16). However, even under the provincial government initiated New Business Relationship with the forest industry, the aboriginal people have gained nothing. As Jäggi has shown by referring to the aboriginal forestry in Ontario, negligence towards the aboriginal people by governments persists both on the 'political level' and the 'planning and management level' (p. 17).

All the literature mentioned above shows one common thing. The First Nations people who have been neglected so far in the forest management decision-making process are trying to find a niche in different forest management plans created mostly by the federal government. The Model Forest Program is one of these plans that strive to achieve sustainable forestry for all people in Canada—aboriginal and non-aboriginal. The participation of the First Nations has become almost a regular factor in this MFP that the Long Beach Model Forest Society, like other MFPs in Canada, tries to promote. Very recent changes on the Board of Directors, where more First Nation's positions are created must be an important step toward the increasing First Nations participation in the LBMF program.

The literature on aboriginal forestry describes some common trends regarding the state-First Nation's relationship. The aboriginal people have been the victims of continuous denial of the opportunity of full participation in the forestry programs which envisage (in theory) aboriginal autonomy and self-governance. The state is not hostile toward the native Indian communities but at the same time not cooperative either. The government controls the forest tenure arrangements which act against the interests of each Indian community with respect to the use of land. In the lights of these general evidences, it is interesting to see whether the Long Beach CF is facing the same type of problems. No in-depth study exists on Long Beach forestry program to date. Therefore, the present study will bring more concrete and specific evidence of Long Beach Model Forest Program's functioning involving, among other parties, First Nations communities.

CHAPTER 6

Sustainable Forestry Program of LBMFS: What It Has Really Achieved

The Long Beach Model Forest Society, like any other development organization, sets its own goals and objectives and operates different projects according to the development philosophy that it builds. However, the fieldwork in Ucluelet and Tofino has exposed some gaps between the theoretical projections of the LBMF program and the practical situations. The following section deals with three topics: goals and objectives, participation of the First Nations in the LBMF program, and the land tenure arrangements.

Goals and Objectives of LBMFS: Are there too many?

Long Beach Model Forest Society operates in an environment that is highly political in nature and thus, complex. British Columbia has always attracted big forest companies for its old-growth forest reserve (the largest in the world). Only recently, there has been a partial shift from an industrial forestry paradigm to, possibly, a sustainable forestry paradigm. This is evident in numerous events that have happened in British Columbia in general and Clayoquot Sound in particular. Now, there is a Scientific Panel which recommends the best possible sustainable forestry practice, and there is a Central Region Board to make all suggestions to the provincial government of BC regarding land use in Clayoquot Sound. It has never been easy for the LBMFS to situate itself in this type of turbulent environment.

Therefore, the initial goals and objectives set up in 1992 were soon to be replaced in the Phase I proposal. As seen earlier, Phase I's all encompassing goal was not enough, as thought by participating sectors in the LBMFS's Board, to address the conflicting and unavoidable situations of First Nation's participation, and resource management issues. Again, that one-goal program gave way to the present one-vision-two-goals-four objectives program in the Phase II period. Now the major goals are to raise awareness and demonstrate the commitment of forest users, managers, and researchers, at the local, national and international levels to the concepts of sustainability and integrated resource management as they apply to the whole range of forest values, both intrinsic and instrumental. Also, the goal of the LBMFS is to demonstrate through ecosystem-based forest management how the supply of forest-based, ecological, social, cultural, and economic benefits can be maintained. These goals are supported by four objectives: research capabilities to be continued to promote sustainable forest management; use of a demonstration site to build criteria for the SFM; exchange of knowledge between the FNs and the non-FN communities, landowners, and resource managers and identifying the criteria and indicators of the SFM linked to the criteria and indicators of Canadian Council of Forest Ministers. Now the question is, what are the tools and strategies LBMFS employ to achieve these new goals and objectives?

In the second Phase, LBMFS built a broader 'vision' that gave the organization the guidelines to construct goals and objectives and work accordingly toward sustainable forestry in Clayoquot Sound and Barkley Sound. However,

according to a former Director at the Board of Directors, there could be no single vision in Clayoquot Sound that could represent the interests of all parties involved, particularly the First Nations:

> I don't think the vision of LBMFS is shared by everybody. Everybody has a different long-term vision for Clayoquot Sound or the region in general. Some people have a vision of Clayoquot Sound becoming a park, right? That vision means, to some degree, for the First Nations no activity and First Nations have been utilizing forest resource and marine resources for thousands of years. So, the park system is very Euro-based and doesn't fit with the vision. There are a lot of visions and I have mine. As far as the LBMF is concerned, I don't think they have a common vision. You can basically say that LBMFS put out a single statement, but I don't think it necessarily represents the whole Long Beach Model Forest area. [74]

He goes on to explain that basically there has been no change in the goals and objectives from Phase I to Phase II of the LBMF program. The objectives of the Phase II proposal are just the result of 'word smiths' and 'unrealistic, and unfortunately, to some extent, even 'funny.' Whereas it is possible to set a single goal and that is to make the organization 'a third party organization, a series of goals and objectives have been formulated that only makes the already existing complex situation even more complex. According to a First Nation Director who represents Members at Large sector at the Board, the Phase II proposal has been made only to renew the funding from the Canadian Forest Service, although the CFS itself does not understand all of the goals and objectives because they are 'so broad and unclear.'

The Assistant General Manager of the LBMFS would like to think otherwise. According to her, lack of any unified, long-term vision for LBMFS can not be regarded as an organizational failure. Rather, one should always keep in mind that BC is politically different from the rest of Canada and the political complexities and instability certainly have shaped the process of constructing a vision for the LBMFS:

> It's been difficult for our organization to think ahead for two or three years at a time, and I attribute some of that to the fact that we are in an environment that is always shifting, all of the time. The goal post is shifting, the tenures shifting, the ownership of the tenure is shifting. So, we have to be very responsive to those shifts. So, it's been very difficult for the organization to think of a long period of time because these jurisdictions are very short. And they keep changing because of treaty, Scientific Panel, the provincial government.

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[74] The former Director stepped down from the Board as he was very annoyed to see the LBMFS is 'going nowhere.' According to him, LBMFS is trying to engage in 'too many things, to please too many people at the same time.'

Therefore, for some people the goals and objectives of LBMFS can be still useful to achieve a model of sustainable forestry in the region. The representative from BC's Ministry of Forests at the Board of Directors seems very optimistic. He believes that these goals and objectives are more 'promising' than before and more realistic to follow the Scientific Panel's recommendations. The General Manager of LBMFS views the Phase II proposal with some caution. For him, the first objective of the Phase II proposal is really confusing, and may not be conducive to understanding the sustainable forest management scenario in the region. His major objection is against a 'tie' between 'forest resource management' and 'sustainable forest management'. The first concept, 'forest resource management' reflects the ideas of industrial forestry that have not been able to grasp the essence of sustainable forest management (SFM). Thus, he says:

> Forest resource management is not always sustainable. And improving the credibility of forest resource management, it seems like if they just get people to understand what SFM is then that will somehow automatically improve the credibility of forest resource management. So, its almost an assumption behind it that the resource managers are credible but what instead happens is just people elevate their understanding of SFM and I don't buy that, I don't buy a tie between those two. I think those are two totally different objectives, promoting the understanding of SFM ought to be the goal, the objective and improving the credibility of forest resource management should not be in there.

While the GM opposes the fusion of traditional forest management and sustainable forest management, he is optimistic about the research capability of LBMFS research projects which are the main instruments to fulfill the goal of SFM (objective II). Here again, he thinks that all the members of the Board of Directors and the LBMFS staff should have a very clear understanding of each individual resource in the region. It is the lack of knowledge about the resources, he believes, that makes it difficult even to frame a simple question at the Board level meeting. This has resulted in 'almost no capacity building' by the LBMFS in the Clayoquot Sound, which is quite unfortunate considering the time that has gone by (five years). As in objective I, objective III gives one the impression, the GM explains, that the First Nations TEK and the non-First Nation knowledge can be mixed up without any trouble. He does not think it is possible and, thus, opines for a separate objective that deals with the First Nation TEK only. However, without a clear definition of TEK by the First Nation, and especially defining their relationship with the forests, the First Nation TEK remains vague.

The respondents regard the fourth objective of the Phase II proposal, sharing of knowledge and information on sustainable forest management between the First Nations and the other forest stakeholders, as the most important and valuable. However, to what degree LBMFS has been successful in defining the criteria and indicators of SFM in Clayoquot Sound is not clear to the respondents. If both Clayoquot and Berkeley Sound are taken into account, there are four major

players who need to be united together—First Nations, forest industries, provincial government of BC, and the federal government. The problem is, each of these players is involved in something 'bigger' than the LBMFS which makes it almost impossible to simultaneously bring them under one umbrella.

There are a few things going on in the Clayoquot Sound area that the First Nations are more interested in. From the beginning of the LBMF program the First Nations have been one of the major supporters. However, the LBMFS failed to maintain strong relationships with the First nations for reasons.[75] There has been very little FN representation among the LBMFS staff that could maintain strong relationships between the organization and the FN communities. Another reason for the 'slight' distancing is the increased level of activity around treaty settlements, and land allocation decisions, i.e., the activities of the Central Region Board. Because of this, few FN people who are motivated and committed to move the FN cause forward find the LBMFS powerful enough to rely on. The Director representing a First Nation forest company at the Board said that the FN's TEK is the most important objective for the FN people in Clayoquot Sound and the FN will continue to fight to incorporate their TEK in the sustainable forest management practice 'with or without LBMFS.' With so many major events happening for the FN people, LBMFS is not their 'top priority' now.

The relationship between LBMFS and the provincial government is not bad, but it could be 'tighter.' Initially, the provincial government helped to get the LBMF program going, providing both financial and technical assistance in different projects. But as the program went along, the LBMFS started to see provincial government as a 'dominant' force in the program, trying to take control of the program. This has created a distance between them. Many respondents felt that as the owner of the lands in Clayoquot Sound and Berkeley Sound, the provincial government should be treated as a 'sweeter partner' by the LBMFS, not as a 'bad guy.'

The federal government has some kind of ownership of the program. It initiated and funds the program. The major reason for the federal government to be in the program is to see that LBMFS has helped build the criteria and indicators of SFM in the region. In the process, the federal government has not been 'dominant' or 'compelling' but surely a little 'indifferent.' They have never told the LBMFS clearly whether the funds will be coming for sure for the next year or not. For that reason, the LBMFS has always remained 'distanced' from the CFS and has been busy preparing progress reports to ensure the flow of funds. The federal government's reluctance to involve itself more closely into the program is caused by federal-provincial tension. Because the provincial government is the owner of the land and because the scenario is very complicated, economically and politically, the federal government does not want to participate closely, instead it has decided to stand clear and observe things quietly.

The forestry industries have traditionally practiced commercial logging in the region. In the process they created a lot of jobs in the local communities, but

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[75] This section is based on the conversation with the present President of the Board of Directors of LBMFS. He acted as the interim GM for the organization and was about to finish his contract as GM during the time of the fieldwork.

the environmental costs were too high. Since the beginning of the LBMF program, the major forest company in Clayoquot Sound, McMillan Bloedel, was involved in the program. The company provided a building for the Rainforest Interpretive Centre (RIC) and sent a Director at the Board level to exchange knowledge with other sectors including the FN and explores the possibilities of SFM in the region. When McMillan Bloedel sold all the forest land to a much bigger Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd., it both created anxiety and hope among the local communities. Anxiety because as a forest company, its principal aim is to log the forests. Hope because, as a large industry, it might be possible to get some pieces of land from them that could be used as demonstration sites for SFM. At the same time, the company is extending its hands of partnership with the First Nations. The First Nations are very optimistic about the joint-venture forest management with the forest companies. However, with the first proposal a community forestry project being rejected by the provincial government, the LBMFS has not received any commitment so far from Weyerhaeuser about the demonstration site.

Many respondents have referred to an unstable organizational structure as the major reason for LBMFS's inability to act as a strong mediator among the partners in the Board. All the respondents agreed that a strong organizational structure could enable the organization to act as a third party organization by creating transparency among the partners and staff and help define the criteria of sustainable forestry management. From the beginning of the LBMFS, it was fraught with instability and conflict among the staff and between the Board and the staff. It never had a stable GM until August 1999 when the organization hired the present GM. In its five years of operation, the organization has seen five managers come and go; during 1997-99 periods alone, three GMs were appointed. The qualification of the GMs has been a major question to many respondents. The first GM of LBMFS, who is a First Nation person, thinks that his appointment as a GM was a wrong decision:

> I guess what I always told them, look I don't feel fully qualified to be talking about forest management, and I am not a forester. But I am a community person, I know how to get people together and discuss things. The way I understood the model forest was interpreted, translated differently by other staff members. So, we were sending mixed messages to the communities.

LBMFS could not hire a General Manager for a longer period of time because, according to some respondents, of its dubious goals and objectives. 'What does really LBMF mean?', 'How can it fit into a problematic environment like Clayoquot Sound?' are the types of questions the Directors are trying to find the answers to. Without a stable and strong staff, the LBMFS has had difficulty in communicating with the Board of Directors and the Administration Committee. The situation became worse when the Assistant General Manager and the interim GM got into a bitter personal conflict that lasted for two years. In this period, LBMFS virtually became unproductive and inactive and started losing legitimacy to the broader society. Again, the GM-AGM conflict was fuelled by the existing

Ucluelet-Tofino divides with the GM physically based in Ucluelet and the AGM in Tofino. In addition to that, there has been always communication gap between the members of the Administration Committee and the Board of Directors. Personal interest and conflict have marred the smooth operation of the whole organization.

The respondents are in favor of a total restructuring of the LBMFS. According to some respondents, the CFS has been too lenient and/or apathetic about the staff capacity that enabled some inefficient persons to occupy a position in the organization, a position that should have never existed in the first place.[76] Rather, as the President of the Board thinks, the staffing should correspond with the vision and goals of the organization:

> The goals and objectives of LBMF are good. But I think we have to define them even closer. Because we have limited funding and we are going to have limited staffing, we just can't support large infrastructure with the budgets that we have. So, if we can refine our vision or define that vision carefully and focus our efforts on that clearly defined set of target, then we can decide what the staffing structure should look like, and what the skills and capacities within the staffing structure should be. So, there needs to be a continuing evaluation as we go along.

The respondents were not totally hopeless about the organization though. Their major concern is to see the LBMFS as a third party organization, working neutrally using its research capabilities to help bring transparency among the different stakeholders. To do that, LBMFS and both its Board of Directors and the Administration Committee have to come out of their traditional philosophy of development:

> We, as an organization, have tended to follow a trajectory that's very similar to others. We establish, we set goals, we develop a comfortable niche and we maintain the niche at the expense of development and innovation and creating because it is comfortable. We reduced the risk by assessing where we can sit within the community safely and as long as we stay in that "band of safety".....and as long as the funding level supports that ribbon of safety and security that we are in, there is very little inducement to move out.....and its that continual assessment of whether that band or ribbon of activity is where we want to be.....and strive to define it. (President, Board of Directors, LBMFS).

First Nation input: Quality or Quantity?

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[76] This was directed toward the AGM of the LBMFS. A former Director said that a tiny organization like LBMFS should never have had the AGM position. The AGM, he argued, had exploited her personal connections at the higher level of authority among the provincial and federal governments and 'ousted' two GMs because they did not want to work under AGM's authority.

Most visibly, the First Nation communities have participated in different LBMF projects, such as, the Community Internship Program, the Geographic Information System, and the Rainforest Interpretive Center, etc. In these projects, the First Nation youth are employed to do research learned how to use GIS to map up their traditional and cultural resources, and disseminate First Nation values and cultural knowledge to the non-FN communities. Apart from these activities, very recently the First Nations representations at the LBMFS's Board have increased. Whereas there was only one Director representing the Nuu-Chah-Nulth tribal council at the Board, now there are seven First Nation Directors representing different partners, economic and non-economic. Do the increased number of First Nations seats mean their increased participation in the program? It depends on how strong the representation is.

The General Manager of the LBMFS believes that First Nation and non-FN representatives at the Board are equal in terms of number but not equal in terms of 'quality' of representation. The First Nation Directors lack, according to him, clear personal and collective understanding of forest resources; the forestry professionals who are at the Board do not. He argues that the forestry professionals have strong academic backgrounds in forest management and they have a clearly defined relationship with the forest resources through their work. But the First Nation representatives do not have any unified agreement as to how the forest should be managed. Even though the First Nation representatives talk about TEK, this very term means different things to different First Nation people. Some relate TEK to fishery, some to conservation of forests and some relate it to creation of jobs for their own communities. Therefore, there is always a lack of understanding as to what the First Nations want at the Board. Some First Nations representatives doubt that well-qualified First Nation Directors represent the First Nations. Lack of technical expertise, and formal academic background in forest management, have been described as major weaknesses of First Nations representatives at the Board. Sometimes they are too informal, thinks a First Nation Director, expressing their concerns verbally, not in written form, to the other directors at the Board.

First Nation presence in the program could be better if there were good communications between the representatives and the communities they represent. Except for very few Directors, most of the First Nation Directors admitted that the communication between them and the communities is very poor. The Youth Council Director is a young and enthusiastic person who envisions moving forward the voices of First Nation and non-FN youth. She maintains regular contact with the community youths through meetings and personal contacts and brings their concerns to the table. She employs her previous experience when she was working as a staff member of the LBMFS. Her stand is very clear:

> One of the biggest concerns of our youth is accountability for our actions. So, accountability to what happens now with forest management, the degradation of forests, alternative uses such as non-timber forest products whether it be recreational use or just seen the forest in holistic sense rather than simply for timber use. Youth voices

> are becoming louder and they have let everybody know whatever the Panel or whoever do anything, youth have to be involved, have to have a say in the process.

The Director who represents Iisaak Forest Resources, a First Nations forest company, at the Board, is a qualified forestry professional who has very clear views about the regional politics concerning the forest resource management. Although he represents a FN company at the Board, his major intention is to carry on the fight to achieve ground level SFM activities in Clayquot Sound. One of his major concerns is to see the First Nations gain access to the local forest management and in that respect, Iisaak has come a long way. Now, through Interim Measures Extension Agreement, it owns more than fifty percent of the forests in Clayoquot Sound and hopes to increase the volume gradually. The Iisaak director thinks that incorporating FN's TEK into forest resource management may not be an easy job in the region, but again he is optimistic about that. He believes that the LBMFS still holds many opportunities for the First Nations to be involved in the program. Some First Nation representatives do not think of any positive outcome from the LBMFS for the First Nation people. Thus, the director of the Members at large and the Mamook Development Corporation argue that full and active participation of the First Nations have not been realized in the LBMF program. It is not because there was lack of enthusiasm on the First Nations' part but because the LBMFS has failed to deliver any clearly defined services to the First Nations communities. According to the director of Members at large sector, the LBMFS has confused the First Nations people with its complicated goals and objectives. He does not understand the meaning of "members at large" and asks, "who are the members at large that I am representing?" If the Director himself does not understand the underlying philosophy of the sector he representing, how can he communicate effectively with his sector members? Some First Nations representatives believe that vagueness in LBMFS's agenda has only helped the directors to remain unaccountable to their sectors. Initially, the FN people were very enthusiastic about the LBMF program because there was 'money' for the FN youth in different projects. Now that the funds for First Nations projects are reduced, there are fewer jobs and less enthusiasm among the First Nations. They do not have any 'willingness' to participate in the program any more; whatever participation of First Nations is there in the program it is not active or spontaneous, and it is 'token' involvement. The Director of Mamook Development Corporation regarded the LBMF program as "of no use" to the First Nation people because it has failed to demonstrate any ground level SFM practice. So, maybe there are some First Nations representatives sitting at the Board, but he believes that the overall impact of the LBMF program has not been high enough to convince the First Nation people.

While the First Nations participation is viewed not as meaningful as it should be by the First Nations, the provincial government, federal government, and the LBMFS's staff are very hopeful about a SFM possibility in Clayoquot Sound because of increased presence of the First Nations on the Board of

Directors. In spite of the failures so far, the First Nations also view the LBMFS as a platform to sit and talk with the forest industries which leads to more and more joint forest management by the First Nations and the forest industries. The First Nations believe that with a clearly defined mandate, the LBMFS can be a major vehicle that may help to fulfill their dream of practicing First Nation's SFM in the Clayoquot Sound area.

With increased representations on the Board of Directors, the First Nations now have greater opportunity to take part in the decision making process of the LBMFS. However, the First Nations representatives think that the LBMFS should not be given any decision-making authority in land use decisions. That should be limited to the CRB, as it has been since the formation of CRB. In the Board of Directors meeting, the lack of personal interest of the First Nation representative was clearly noticeable. A Board meeting usually spans over one and half to two hours depending on the nature of issues discussed. Not all, but most of the Directors including the First Nation's, attended the Board meeting that I attended. During the entire process, everybody gave their opinions and input about the issues in question except the First Nation director. The person did not seem to have the slightest interest in the proceedings and did not utter a single word. She only showed her hands when the Chair of the meeting asked the members to vote. One can ask, therefore, how serious are the First Nations about their involvement in the LBMF program?

Land Tenure Reform: Difficult but may not be impossible

The Long Beach Model Forest Society is not concerned with any land, it is concerned with the activities that may be carried out in land owned by its partners. To demonstrate the criteria and indicators of SFM, LBMFS is now trying to get some land from the partners as a demonstration ground. The second community forestry project is only an expression of the necessity of the organization.

When the LBMFS started its operation in 1994, land tenure reform was an issue that nobody was encouraged to talk about at the Board level. Now, five years later, 'treaty,' 'tenure,' 'education,' etc. have become the language of the organization. There is an increasing trend of joint forest management by the forest industries and the First Nations and the provincial government is increasingly contemplating about changing the tenure structure. In this changing scenario, there are a few land tenure options that people are talking about in the Clayoquot Sound.

The community forestry project proposal is a big step toward gaining access to land for SFM demonstration, some believe. However, even though the provincial government no longer seems rigid about its control over the land, it does not mean that the provincial government will automatically approve the proposal. The first one was rejected and the reasons for rejection seem to be still there. The provincial government is still confused about the meaning of the term "community" when used in the context of Clayoquot Sound. There are different factions among the communities here and the communities have failed to raise a common voice for "community control" of some land. The director representing

the provincial Ministry of Forests thinks that it is not easy for the communities to look at the common good when there are differences of interests among different forest stakeholders. He, however, believes that having both First Nations and the forest industries in the LBMF program, there is the possibility of achieving SFM in the Clayoquot Sound.

The First Nations believe otherwise. According to them, the First Nations should have their own model forest program controlled and operated fully by them and only that way would it be possible to achieve SFM. There are disagreements on the absolute control of land by any single community. Thus, a firm believer in community involvement in planning, decision making, and implementation, the President of the Board of Directors explains the fundamental difference between industrial forestry and community forest management:

> Industry is very easy to define—profit driven, share holders look like this, corporate structure look like this, it is easy to know who to talk to, it is easy to know what the expectations or to define expectations, it is easy to ensure compliance. Communities are composed of individuals with views that change, comprised of people with different levels of power, different views and it is difficult for the government to deal with that.

Having said that, the President thinks that it is good to talk about tenure reform in BC but that it may not be an efficient idea to press for 'strict community control.' Instead, because of complexity of BC's and thus, Clayoquot Sound's resource management problem, there should be a range of tenure options—community based tree farm license, corporate based tree farm license, and First Nations tree farm license. The LBMFS with its research facilities and proper expertise, may be capable of providing the provincial and the federal government with tenure suggestions. Unfortunately the LBMFS is engaged in defining the tenure reform from the 'social' aspect ignoring the economic aspects of tenure arrangements. If the LBMFS wants to be involved strongly in the tenure reform process, he suggests LBMFS should first do a comparative analysis of all the tenure reforms surrounding the Clayoquot and Berkeley Sound areas and then come up with different suggestions for the government to look at.

The above discussion reveals one important aspect of the Long Beach Model Forest Society. A few years have elapsed since the organization started its operations but very little has been achieved so far. the goals and objectives have gone through several revisions only to face more and more criticisms from its different partners. The goals and objectives are not only too many in number, these are obscure as well. The stakeholders in the program do not understand them properly and few who do, believe that these are contradictory to LBMFS's primary concern—creating a model of sustainable forest management. The First Nation participation has definitely increased at least through adding up more seats at the Board of Directors but the quality of their participation is not satisfactory. In fact, First Nations' strength and power in the region's political bargaining power has led to an apathetic attitude of them toward the LBMF program. The organization is

now desperately looking for a demonstration land from its land-holding partners. However, the situation is made complicated by the land tenure arrangements in the region. Despite this, the organization is ably situated to manipulate its collaborative efforts and convince the forest companies to give it some land so that it can demonstrate, at the ground level, the criteria of a sustainable forest management. Again, it depends a lot in its capacity to bring conflicting local communities under the umbrella of one vision, i.e., to understand the necessity of a sustainable forest management practice in the region that incorporates the values of different interest groups. A further analysis into the functioning's of the LBMF program with organizational theories may be useful to understand the underlying pros and cons of this sustainable forestry program.

CHAPTER 7

Forestry Programs of BRAC AND LBMFS: A Comparative Analysis

As we have seen, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) and the Long Beach Model Forest Society are engaged in sustainable forestry in two different socio-political and geographical contexts. In Bangladesh, BRAC operates in an environment that is plagued by scarcity and poverty; scarcity of resources and rampant poverty that cyclically cause and are caused by environmental degradation. The LBMFS works in an affluent society where economic considerations come after democratic issues in development programs: issues of equal democratic participation in resource management process, decision-making, accountability and transparency. Both BRAC and the LBMFS operate under certain goals and objectives that are supposed to be based on the needs of the participating groups in these two forestry programs in two different situations.

The field visits to BRAC's Social Forestry plantations and the LBMFS have revealed some inconsistencies between their goals and objectives, public participation, and the land tenure arrangements. The following section will compare these dimensions within each organization and at the same time compare them. Later, an inter-organizational comparison will be made for these two organizations in the light of the organizational theories in order to explain similarities and differences in their theory and practice of those dimensions of goals/objectives, public participation, and land tenure arrangements. These theories of organization—contingency, resource dependency, and collaboration—are not used to test them against the empirical findings of BRAC and LBMFS. Rather, they are supposed to act as heuristic *tools* to understand the relationship between the idea of sustainable forestry programs these two organizations promote and the *organizational* complexities, involved in realizing those goals. The information presented below on BRAC's social forestry program is based on research in two districts which are only a part of the organization's extensive forestation program across the whole country. Variations may exist in ecological circumstances and in types of communities. Moreover, the number of people who were formally interviewed was very small (although, numerous informal contacts relevant to the study were made and also, numerous documentary sources were used) given the large membership of SF program and the organization's management. Having said that, one should also remember that BRAC's tight and consistent organizational structure strives to produce uniform policies in operational zing different strategies of its development programs (e.g., health, credit, informal education etc.). Social forestry program is no exception. Therefore, the number of interviewees and the areas may be small but it is at the same time plausible that the weaknesses found in SF program in these two districts may be found more or less in other parts of Bangladesh as well.

Sustainable Forestry: a comparison of conceptual issues and empirical findings of BRAC and LBMFS

Goals and Objectives:

To recall, the major goals of BRAC's SF program are poverty alleviation and reducing environmental degradation by increasing the number of trees on land. These two broader goals are broken down into several objectives that are classified into Food, Environment, and Sustainability. BRAC believes that tree planting will ensure food security through producing both food and timber and this increased food security will lead to reduced pressure on the environment—more trees would mean more food and more timber and less pressure on forests, and more awareness in the rural people about environmental conservation, soil erosion, water pollution etc. These two objectives will reinforce each other, as BRAC claims, to attain sustainability of forest resources in Bangladesh.

Consequently, BRAC develops certain strategies and techniques to achieve these goals and objectives. The women beneficiaries have to join the Village Organization (VO) in order to be qualified to be a SF beneficiary in the first place. This is because the VO is believed to be the beginning of an institutional framework that leads the women to form interactive relationships with BRAC management, government agencies and other possible resources. The organization also disburses monthly wages to the beneficiaries to strengthen their participation in the program and to cover the operational costs of planting trees. The wages are for only the first year of the program for each woman. BRAC provides technical assistance through a whole range of trained officials and grassroots level workers—Regional Sector Specialist, Regional Manager, Area Manager, Program Organizers (both Social Forestry and the grassroots) and at the top—the Sector Specialist and other Regional Sector Specialists. Both the BRAC officials and workers and the women participants take short-term training on social forestry, or to be precise, on the technicalities of planting trees.

The strategies and techniques used by BRAC to achieve the goals appear to be little in coherent with the ground level operations of the SF program. While for the women members of the SF program there is an awareness of environmental degradation through deforestation, the principal reason to join the SF program is purely economic. For them, the monthly wage is a guarantee of financial flow for at least one year. However, their long-term interests in the program are embedded in the hope of getting both timber and money in future when the trees will be felled. The environmental awareness of the BRAC officials is better than that of the women participants given that the officials *know* the relationships between soil erosion, water pollution, conservation, and deforestation. With little scientific understanding of environmental degradation caused by the complex interplay of tree species and soil types, BRAC plants foreign tree species when the majority of the women members are silently in favor of more familiar and soil-friendly traditional trees. The SF management appears to rely on scientific explanations from western studies to claim the positive impacts of Eucalyptus and other foreign trees on biomass production not knowing or ignoring the fact that those studies do

talk about the negative impacts of these trees on soils where the proper conditions for planting them are not met. However, BRAC's enthusiasm about increased biomass production in SF plantations through plantations of Eucalyptus and other leguminous trees is not backed by proper scientific research by the Research and Evaluation Division. The RED may need to do more thorough investigation about the long-term impacts of these trees on soil. While negative environmental impacts of Eucalyptus is well documented in many parts of developing world, thorough scientific scrutiny will enable BRAC to put long term vision on the development and expansion of its SF program.

"Increase food security", one of the major objectives of BRAC's SF program, seem little too strong in its half-yearly reports to its donor—European Union's Food Security Unit. As a matter of fact, BRAC added the term 'food security' in it sustainable forestry agenda to fulfill the conditions of FSU's financial assistance to the program. That makes perfect sense in broader Bangladesh scenario where even the state has to oblige the conditions of donations from different foreign sources, almost unconditionally. The organization may need to strengthen the technical back ups to the SF program to handle the risks and uncertainties involved (e.g., draught, lack of irrigation facilities, costly vegetable seeds, costs of re-fencing etc.). Being aware of its relative weaknesses, the management cannot put too much pressure on women to plant vegetables all the year around. Therefore, the agroforestry program has remained weak in its vegetable plantation part. This should not be misconstrued, nevertheless. The women members of the SF program do benefit from the agroforestry operation. A society that is weakened by sheer poverty, even a small amount of additional resources mean a lot; the women beneficiaries are able to grow at least some vegetables now which were impossible for them before the BRAC intervention. One can hope that with stronger and lengthier forestry training of SF officials and the women members at its Training and Resource Center (TARC), the BRAC officials will be more confident to provide technical and logistic support to the women.

The institutional network that the SF program portrays involves three parties—the BRAC SF management, the women participants, and the donor, i.e., the Food Security Unit of the European Commission. The organization could not establish any cooperative arrangements with the government agencies like the Forest Department and the Land Revenue Agency. This network, thus, seems incomplete, and has resulted in women's increased dependency on BRAC. This process may eventually obstruct the women developing social capital. By the same token, with no other agency with which to exchange knowledge or expertise, and experience, BRAC has developed *asymmetric dependence* on European Union for funds. The relationship is asymmetric because the BRAC management does not offer anything to the EU in exchange for funds but the half-yearly progress reports. The European Union does not have real interest in the sustainable forestry in Bangladesh; rather they have a short-term intention to distribute the EU's money to the poor women in Bangladesh. The obvious result is BRAC's struggle to scale up the SF program as rapidly as possible so that more money is guaranteed in the next year from the EU to enroll new members into the program.

The sustainable forestry program of the Long Beach Model Forest Society shows more disparities between its theoretical projections of the goals and objectives and less success in their practical implementations. Since its inception in 1992, the goals and objectives of the LBMFS have gone through quite a few changes. In 1992, three goals were set up by the Model Forest Program to be implemented in the Long Beach area. These were a combination of a planning framework, a demonstration of sustainable forestry using scientific technology, and incorporation of scientific information about non-timber forest resources into an 'integrated' forest management system. However, the geo-political context and the economic environment of Long Beach area soon called for revising the goals of the LBMFS. Consequently, in the Phase I proposal of the LBMFS, one broader goal replaced the previous ones and promised to ensure greater involvement of the First Nations and non-FNs forest dependent communities in the quest for a sustainable forestry demonstration in Clayquot and Barkeley Sound. This broader goal envisioned a joint problem-solving approach through the inclusion of all forest stakeholders in the decision-making process and advocated the attainment of all values—social, cultural, political, and environmental—in the forest management process. Again, this goal could not cope with ever changing socio-political context of British Columbia and thus, it gave way to two major goals led by one single vision in the Phase II proposal of the LBMFS. While the vision is the philosophical argument for a Model Forest Program in the Long Beach area, the goals deliver the strategies and tools to be used to create the space for that philosophical aspiration to achieve. In other words, the goals incorporate the broad range of forest stakeholders and focus more closely (but not entirely) on the First Nation communities, their Traditional Ecological Knowledge and an integration of TEK and industrial forest management practice. To put it simply, this strategy entails a combined need for an awareness of sustainable forest management practice and a healthy democratic process. The importance of research activities and the sharing of knowledge between FN and non-FN communities are regarded as major objectives to building appropriate situation-specific criteria of SFM through practical demonstration using a demonstration site. In other words, the Phase II goals and objectives promise a prosperous future—both for the FN and non-FN communities and for the model of sustainable forest management practice, locally and globally.

In practice, the Long Beach Model Forest Society has failed to show the necessary conditions that are conducive to achieve these goals and objectives. The vision that LBMFS has generated is questioned on the ground of its universal acceptance. Because of the existence of conflicting interests in the region, some believe that one single vision may not necessarily include the interests of all stakeholders. It is said, moreover, that constant changes of goals and objectives of LBMFS on the ground level are meaningless since there is no difference between the present and the previous goals and objectives. The change is verbal and cosmetic, not in the content. Even the objectives are not socially and strategically compatible. Although LBMFS has emphasized an integrated forest management practice, it is quite evident from the field visits that such an integration of FN and non-FN industrial values is not easy, or perhaps impossible since these involved

opposing interests. Confusion and lack of understanding remain among the non-First Nations people on the Board of Directors, and the LBMFS's management as to what Traditional Ecological Knowledge should precisely mean in terms of modern sustainable forest management practice. As Marc Stevenson (2001) points out, this knowledge gap is created by the misinterpretations of TEK and values when translated into English by the non-FN people and also, lack of existing research from within the First Nations to delineate the concepts/issues that are part of their TEK. With TEK as one of their principal objectives to achieve through the Model Forest Program, the First Nations will continue to focus on the ability of the Long Beach Model Forest Society to see whether these TEK have been incorporated into any effort to create indicators of sustainable forest management in the Clayquout Sound.

Therefore, it is not really clear how far the LBMFS could go toward realizing these goals and objectives when these are not clearly defined but vaguely explained through the creation of a series of semi-objectives. With these goals and objectives at hand, the LBMFS has failed to communicate strongly and equally with all four major actors in the sustainable forest management scenario—the First Nations, the provincial government, the federal government, and the forest industries. The First Nations seem to have lost interest in the LBMF program because they think that the program has not delivered any measurable benefits for them. Also, the First Nations are more interested in joint-venture forest management with the forest industries because of the immediate economic gains, treaty negotiations with the provincial government that will give them ultimate authority on land, and are interested in the Central Region Board because they have very strong representations there. The provincial government should be on the LBMFS's priority lists but it is not. The Society received considerable technical and financial assistance from them at the initial stages of the program, but the relationship became distanced as the Society thought that the provincial government was becoming dominant in the process and therefore, decided to be not so close to the provincial government. However, people on the LBMFS's Board of Directors, staff and management felt a need for more effective relationship with the provincial government since it is the owner of majority of land in British Columbia. The provincial government rejected the first community forestry proposal that the LBMFS developed. This failure probably reiterates the need for a good communicative process between the provincial government and the LBMFS.

The federal government's role in the LBMF program is not clear and strong. So far, other being the provider of funds for the program, the federal government has taken a passive stand in the whole process. They do not tell the LBMFS what to do or what should be done, or how to do it; rather they listen and observe. This has resulted in a stagnant relationship between the LBMFS and the federal government with the latter being very cautious, thus avoiding any confrontations with the provincial government. It seems that the federal government has only conveyed the idea of sustainable forestry in Canada but without proper institutional back ups to make it a reality. The present relationship between the LBMFS and the federal government cannot be described as

collaborative as the latter has remained indifferent about the whole process. It may be described as resource dependent at best exemplified by yearly progress reports to the Canadian Forest Service by the LBMFS. It resembles BRAC's dependency on the European Union funds. Like BRAC, there is no visible resistance from the LBMFS to reduce the dependence on the federal government. On the contrary, the LBMFS tries to make yearly reports in which it continues to accomplish the major goal of building criteria and indicators of SFM to ensure more funds from the federal government. With no money coming from any other partners at the Board right now, a possible withdrawal of the federal government's funds leaves the entire program in uncertainty. The dependence is not only asymmetric but the accountability is donor-down as well like in BRAC's Social Forestry program. The LBMFS cannot ask the federal government about the latter's performance in the LBMF program and accordingly, the federal government does not make any report to the LBMFS or to the partners at the Board.

The forest industries are very difficult to deal with, at least in this particular situation. The LBMFS is hopeful of strong commitment from the forest industries about a demonstration project but the forest industries in past and in present have not indicated any commitment toward that. Again, it may be seen as lack of communications between the LBMFS and the forest industries.

The flawed strategies that led to the above situations refer to an ill-developed structure of the LBMFS as an organization. As a matter of fact, the LBMFS could never decide the appropriateness of many of its positions among the staff and thus, has recruited and dismissed different people in different positions. Also, the vagueness of its goals and objectives hindered the selection of a stable General Manager with appropriate academic and professional experiences until recently. The structural uncertainty of the organization was fueled to a great extent by the regional differences (Ucluelet-Tofino) that were evident during the interviews of the Assistant General Manager, the interim General Manager and the directors at the Board and the members of the Administration Committee. In the absence of any conflict resolution mechanism within the organization and also from the federal government, the entire organization of the LBMFS was at a standstill for a long period of time. Gradually the Society has lost credibility with the wider society because it stayed away from developing a cooperative atmosphere between the partners or the stakeholders, instead it engaged in fighting and blaming each other. The Hazenboom critique of the Rainforest Interpretive Center was actually an outcome of extreme personal conflict between the GM and the AGM that affected the whole organization. The Board of Directors and the Administration Committee always showed the tendency to neglect the staff in the decision making process of the organization. But that is due to the inability of the staff to convince the Board and the Administration Committee about its neutrality in dealing with the process. Because of the federal government's apathy toward the LBMF program, the LBMFS engaged itself more in the politics of rivalry than in politics of mediation between the different partners. Thus, the LBMFS failed to portray itself to the broader communities as a 'third party' neutral organization.

Public Participation:

The Social Forestry program of BRAC stresses the active participation of women as one of the organization's major working principles. *Participation* as described by BRAC, is to occur in the planning, management, and most importantly, in the decision-making process of the SF program. BRAC admits that *spontaneous* participation of the women beneficiaries is essential if sustainable forestry is to occur. As noted, membership in BRAC's Village Organization is the first criterion for the women to be qualified as a potential beneficiary of the SF program. After their VO membership, BRAC officials choose or select, based on a three-stage selection procedure, a certain number of women who are interested in planting trees. After the selection, the women receive a short training on basic technical aspects of tree planting at the BRAC's Training and Resource Centre (TARC). After this, begins a rigorous but well managed operational process where the grassroots level SF workers and officials have extensive weekly meetings with the women participants. In these meetings, the BRAC officials (POs, Team Leader of an Area Office, Area Managers) share their technical knowledge of social forestry with the women.

The information gathered at the ground level VO meetings is then passed through weekly meetings between the low level BRAC officials and the middle level officials (Regional Managers, Regional Sector Specialists etc.) to upper level SF management at the head office, every month. The upper management that is comprised of the Deputy Executive Director of BRAC (who is also the Director of the Rural Development Program of which the Social Forestry program is a part), Program Manager, and the Sector Specialist of Social Forestry. The SF program management claims that in these meetings the issues that concern the women beneficiaries at the ground level are dealt with and duly considered by the upper management. However, it admits that the ultimate decision-making authority lies with the upper management of BRAC.

In reality, the women beneficiaries are described by BRAC's management as "ignorant" and "illiterate" and thus, these women are incapable of taking good decisions as far as the tree planting is concerned. Therefore, their participation in the SF program cannot be described as "active" (Marsden), or "interactive" (Pretty) or "authentic" (Midgley). Rather, it is quite the opposite of all these—"passive" (Pretty), or "pseudo" (Midgley), or "voluntary" (Marsden). The major reason for this inconsistency between the theory and practice of public participation in BRAC's SF program is that the program itself did not originate with the women members. The idea of social forestry comes from the Government of Bangladesh that encouraged the NGOs to carry out the program through involving the rural people. It is called "participatory forestry" because the rural people participate in this kind of program. In fact, the SF program of BRAC is one of the participatory social forestry programs in Bangladesh that can be categorized as a "target-oriented" project (Oltheten) where the rural women participate as mere subjects and participate only after the blueprint of the whole program is already sketched by the organization. It also explains why the selection of the

women participants resembles a filtering process: the number of women to be selected in one year is already decided by the BRAC management in connection with the amount of money received from the European Union. The process perhaps leads to competition among poor VO members as most of them want to join the program for monthly financial gain. Thus, joining the SF program is no result of an awareness of the environmental degradation on the part of the rural women; it is rather a result of their continuous struggle against omnipresent poverty.

If the program is "target-oriented", then it may restrict the possibility of women's input into the decision-making process. The common perception of the BRAC officials about the women members as "ignorant" and "illiterate" is boiled down into imposing behavior by BRAC management. In other words, whereas the women participants want to plant traditional indigenous trees for fruits and timber, BRAC instructs them to plant *eucalyptus* or *sissoo* or *acacia*, the species that are completely unknown to the women. The weekly meetings between the VO members and the BRAC officials can thus be seen as a means to educate or teach the rural women what is good for them since the women themselves can not decide it. However, the weekly meetings are the only opportunity for the women to take part in any kind of discussion with the BRAC officials. Using Cornwell's typology of public participation, the interactive arrangements between the BRAC management and the women can be termed as "co-option" where BRAC controls the whole process or at best as "co-operation" where BRAC assigns the women the task of planting trees. If it is so then the women members may soon become equivalent to paid employees of the SF program. Consequently, the project probably looses its "collective action" flavor—actions jointly understood and taken by the women and BRAC.

The lower and middle level managers, workers of the Social Forestry program have assumed the roles of information collectors with little devolution of authority from the upper management. The middle and lower level managements, however, relentlessly pursuit the most effective means to achieve the goals and objectives of the program. Frequent meetings between different levels of management validate BRAC's sincerity to improve on the existing weaknesses in SF program. If the frequency of meetings continue then it is perhaps not impossible to see some kind of devolution of authority from the top management to enable the lower and middle level management to come up with innovative approaches to sustainable forestry. In order to create this type of encouraging environment within the organization, the top management will have to continue to work on decreasing dependency on foreign agencies. Again, this should not be impossible for a huge, theoretically decentralized (see figure 2) organization like BRAC.

Like BRAC's Social Forestry program, the LBMFS holds public participation as one of the major objectives of its sustainable forestry program. However, whereas in BRAC the participation is limited to women in rural areas, the LBMFS encourages participation by all types of people—men and women, First Nations and non-FNs, academicians, researchers, forest industries— in other words, "everybody." Unlike many other Model Forest Programs in Canada, the

LBMFS specifically encourages FN participation mainly because of the latter's strong presence in the Long Beach area. Accordingly, the goals and objectives have been changed several times in order to find an appropriate niche for the FN in the whole program. From the beginning, the First Nations were involved in different LBMF projects like the Rainforest Interpretive Center, the Geographic Information System, and the Community Internship Program etc. The Community Internship Program has been the most visible FN participation where the FN youth have participated in different research projects of the LBMFS. In the management structure, there were FN people serving in different positions at different times including the GM, FN liaison officer etc. On the LBMFS's Board of Directors, the number of FN representatives has increased over the years, thus giving the overall impression of increased FN participation in the LBMF program.

The field visits have revealed some disparities between the FN's actual participation in the LBMF program and the 'quality' of their participation. Like the participation of women in BRAC's SF program in Bangladesh, the FN participation has been poor in 'quality'. According to many respondents, most of the FN directors at the Board lack appropriate technical knowledge and the professionalism that is required for dealing with so many strong stakeholders—the federal government, the provincial government, the forest industries, and the so forth. Also, there is significant disagreement among the FN representatives themselves as to the indicators of their Traditional Ecological Knowledge. Few FN directors, however, blame the vagueness of LBMFS's goals and objectives and claim that it has resulted in a communications gap between their people and themselves. In other words, the FN directors are not directly accountable to their people although they are supposed to be. It was apparent during the field work that the LBMFS is rapidly losing its trust among the FN people since after all these years the organization could not come up with any practical demonstration of SFM that could incorporate FN's TEK and the traditional forest resource management. Therefore, while a section of the organizational staff were very optimistic about the increased number of FN representatives on the Board of Directors, the FN directors (who are First Nation people) termed their participation as "token" participation, not active or spontaneous. It would be unwise to think, however, that the FNs have not gained anything from their participation in the LBMF program. The First Nations youth have not only learned how to use GIS to map and inventory the traditional knowledge and resources in the area, they have also actively participated in many Hydroriparian projects of the LBMFS where they have learned the relations between the ecology and the biodiversity and so on. The LBMF program has not really been a "of no use" program although some of the FN directors would like to think that way.

Despite seemingly poor quality participation in the LBMF program, the FNs have accumulated social capital to a noticeable extent through an institutional framework of partnerships on the Board of Directors of LBMFS. The program has given the FNs the opportunity to sit and talk with their principal opponents—the forest industries and the provincial government. This has produced practical joint venture forest management between the FNs and the forest industries that may, as hoped by the FN directors, eventually lead to incorporation of FN's TEK values in

forest management practice. Also, in the case of women participants in Bangladesh, we have seen their potential vulnerability in case of withdrawal of European Union's financial support for the program. But in the case of LBMF program, the situation is completely different for the FN people. Here, they are one of the powerful partners in the program and because of their strong political presence in the resource management scenario in British Columbia and particularly in the Clayquot Sound area (the CRB, the Interim Measures Extension Agreement, Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council etc.), they have the autonomy to either continue to be in the LBMF program or withdraw their support from it. In other words, whereas the women participate in BRAC's SF program because of their extreme poverty and powerlessness, the FN participate in the LBMFS because they are a major power in the region and want to see their interests being served by the LBMFS.

Land Tenure Arrangements:

The social forestry program of BRAC is carried out in largely two types of land: private land of the program participants and leased land from the government, absentee landowners, and the peasants with some excess land. In one of its objectives, BRAC management points to the scarcity of land in Bangladesh. In light of this, the organization projects optimum use of available land for the forestation program.

The uncertain and undefined land tenure system in Bangladesh seems to have affected the very goals of BRAC's SF program: poverty alleviation through sustainable forestry. With not much land around, BRAC has to focus on those women who have already got some land of their own. It means that the poorest women who are supposed to be the target group may not necessarily be targeted. In this scenario, BRAC's policy of leasing lands to women is flawed. First of all, the leasing agreement between the women and the organization are not backed by strongly defined land ownership law and land produce rights laws by the government of Bangladesh. Therefore, the women appear to be extremely vulnerable in the case of land feuds between the landowners and the women. The organization claims that nothing unpleasant of this kind will happen to the women given the strength of the organization as a development agency in Bangladesh. However, land disputes are far too common and also violent in rural Bangladesh and with the existence of the present volatile land registration system in Bangladesh, nothing is impossible.

BRAC could gain significantly if it had a land sharing agreement with the Forest Department that has some land that can be used for tree plantations. But both BRAC and the Forest Department do not seem to have the congenial relationship pivotal for a joint forestation program for which, principally, the latter is to blame. From a joint forestry program like that, the rural women could always expect a certain end product. The existing non-cooperative attitude of the Forest Department has forced the organization to do tree planting in arid, fallow, and uncultivable land that is not fertile enough to plant traditional trees. Therefore, the women members plant the foreign unknown tree species because these grow

relatively easily in sandy and arid land. The foreign species, consequently, pose a threat to the ever-deteriorating environment in the absence of any prior soil preparation by the BRAC management.

The Social Forestry program of BRAC is based on actual planting of trees on land. But the sustainable forest management 'model' of the Long Beach Model Forest Society does not deal with any specific physical area or land. Rather, it carries out research works, projects with the partners of the program and wishes to use the results of these research and projects as models of sustainable forestry. However, there is an increasing need felt in the organization for an actual piece of land, a demonstration site to experiment the criteria of sustainable forest management at the ground level. Consequently, the LBMS, or more particularly its staff, has been trying to convince its partners on the Board to give them a piece of land. The provincial government of British Columbia rejected the first proposal for a community forestry project. But the organization is again working on a proposal of the demonstration land.

As we have seen in BRAC's case, its SF program is threatened by an uncertain land tenure system in Bangladesh and the situation has further deteriorated given the weak institutional framework of the organization in dealing with ownership of leased land and its produce in future. The situation is absolutely different in the case of the LBMF program. Here, the organization, in the first place, does not deal directly with land. It works as the research institution where the different landowners participate through LBMFS's mediation to see whether that research will help them to practice sustainable forest management in their own land. Now, when the LBMFS is seeking some land from these landowners, it is not easy to come by. In Bangladesh, BRAC struggles to get land from the government agencies which have some land to be used for forestation and does not receive positive response from them because of professional rivalry and jealousy between NGOs and the government bureaucracies. In the LBMF area, on the other hand, it is not so much a question of professional rivalry; instead it is the complexities of land tenure arrangements that impede the whole process of getting land for demonstration. As the owner of land in BC, the provincial government cannot automatically allocate some land to the LBMFS as there are other parties to deal with. Thus, the Central Region Board, the Clayquot Sound Scientific Panel Recommendations, the Ministry of Forests of BC, the forest industries and the First Nations etc. are involved in land use decisions in Clayqout Sound. Therefore, when the LBMFS seeks approval of a community forestry project, it really needs to be approved by all the communities with a common vision. As this has not happened yet, it has been difficult for the LBMFS to win a piece of land for demonstration of sustainable forest management.

However, the LBMFS is operating in an environment where there are many opposing interests. For example, the First Nations would like to have their own land to demonstrate their ideas of SFM. Therefore, the First Nations, a powerful representative at the LBMFS's Board, do not like to see the Society get involved in any type of land use jurisdiction, because there is already the CRB to take land use decisions in Clayquot Sound. Even the President of the Board of Directors, (previously the interim GM of the LBMFS) does not really believe that

there can be a forestry project that is governed by the communities exclusively. His notion of land tenure arrangements simply reflects the complex nature of land tenancy in BC and according to him, there should be multiple programs with different tenure options so that a broad range of social and economic values can be judged and experimented with simultaneously.

The most striking resemblance between BRAC's SF program and the LBMFS's sustainable forestry program is the difficulty to obtain land for practicing/demonstrating sustainable forestry program. However, in BRAC's case, if the situation does not project any long-term future hope because of the government's non-cooperation strategy, the LBMFS can still hope to get a demonstration land from its partners at the Board. And increasingly, the attention is directed toward the forest industries. The forest industries have so far not said 'no'; then again they have not said 'yes' either. To get the commitment from the forest industries, the LBMFS should in the beginning build trust among the partners and should be able to facilitate the process with a clearly defined mandate. Unfortunately, many years have gone by and the LBMFS is still unable to be a good facilitator, chiefly due to the fact that it has never been able to establish strong credibility as a third party neutral organization.

The above discussion portrays some prominent discrepancies between the theoretical projections of sustainable forestry and the practical situations in both cases—Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee and Long Beach Model Forest Society (see Table 1 and 2). However, based on the above observation, there is no reason to rule out BRAC's social forestry program as a total failure. The problem arises when we try to compare the goals and objectives of SF program with those of other programs, such as health, credit, and education. But the fact is, the goals and objectives of SF program—participation and sustainable forestry—are quite different from those relatively easy-to-achieve goals of those programs. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee's relative success in those three sectors stems from the very facts that these goals (participation and sustainability) can be realized in ways that are more or less measurable (e.g., increased number of people under education program, increased number of vaccination of children/mothers to reduce infant/child mortality, increased life expectancy through improved medical services and supply of nutrition etc.). The success in these areas brought national and international fame for the organization. Participation of rural women in these programs are facilitated by the very nature of these programs, i.e., readily understandable goals even on the part of those naive villagers in Bangladesh. In contrast to these, the goals and objectives in Social Forestry program are far too complex to understand and to define precisely.

The issue of sustainability entails two basic objectives: one is to make the forest sustainable, the second is to make forests benefit the marginal groups—women members and the First Nations—relying on them. While one could make a reasonable argument that in the long-run a forest has to be sustainable to provide sustainable benefits to people reliant on the forest, much of the real-world planning and implementations points to at best medium term (3-5 years) which is true of both BRAC's SF program and the LBMFS's sustainable forestry program. Within this time horizon, the cost-benefit analysis between the planting of trees

and maintenance effort and the potential revenues accruing from the forests may not work out to a net benefit for anyone let along the marginals.

The sources of benefit for the marginals may then be external to the 'sustainable' nature of the program, they are from outside donors—European Union for the BRAC case and the federal government for the LBMFS—and translated at least in part, into the wages and jobs for the involved marginals. It appears from these two case studies that the major benefit and therefore, attraction of both programs for the marginals is not the benefit they get from the planted trees (for the SF program) or Rainforest Interpretive Center (for LBMFS) but from the money as wages that they obtain in being involved in the program. Since benefits are not necessarily related to 'sustainability' (at least in the short and medium term), any reduction in that monetary benefit may compromise commitment to the key sustainability objective of the program. At least that exactly what has happened in the case of LBMFS; once the short-term economic benefit waned for the FN youth (for jobs etc.), enthusiasm of the FN people about the LBMF program similarly waned. Similarly, potential withdrawal of cash wages by BRAC for the SF program participants may jeopardize the achievement of the objective of sustainability in the long run.

If monetary gain from participation in the forestry program is a common area where the two marginal groups (rural women members and the First Nations) break down the socio-cultural and geo-political barriers and show common interests, the traditional knowledge component of the participation process of these two groups divide them sharply as marginals. First of all, the rural women in Bangladesh have a culture of a dominantly agrarian society that does not concern itself with environmental questions so much. As a matter of fact, trees or environment do not form any distinctive cultural pattern among the Bangladeshi people who largely depend on cash crops (rice, jute etc.) and water resources (fish etc.) for survival. Therefore, the traditional knowledge of women about particular trees that is openly ignored by the BRAC management may not necessarily be conducive to the sustainability of the whole program because that knowledge does not carry long-term existential proofs of success. On the other hand, the First Nations' ecological knowledge (TEK) is embedded in a tribal culture that is based on hunting in the wilderness and thus, relating the very physical existence with the totality of the nature. No wonder, although marginals in terms of the economic advantages compared to the rest of the society, that the First Nations continue to fight for the implementation of their traditional knowledge in the creation of a renewed forest management process (the industry forestry combined with the FN forestry). The lack of a strong traditional basis in environmental knowledge in Bangladesh creates distinctive problems for environmental education and participation in forestry programs which requires a long term educational strategy that is broader than BRAC's SF program.

The discrepancies between the theory and practice of the goals and objectives, public participation, and land tenure arrangements that are somewhat evident from the field studies in Bangladesh and Canada can be understood more clearly by the organizational theories—contingency, resource dependency and collaboration—because of the fact that both BRAC and LBMFS operate within

specific socio-economic and political scenarios that may have profound effects on their sustainable forestry programs. Again, it should not be forgotten that these theories are used as heuristic tools to explain the existing situations in these two programs. The use of contingency theory, however, should be viewed with caution as this theory makes abstract generalizations about the organizational behavior (that is why contingency perspective has become marginalized in organizational theory paradigm). Nonetheless, it is still used by many researchers as a tool for comparative analysis of organizational behavior and differences in organizational performances.

Contingency Theory: The Sustainable Forestry of BRAC and LBMFS

Technology:

The Social Forestry program of BRAC can possibly termed as a *short-term* investment in Food Security, i.e., food security for the poor rural women. As an established organization, BRAC delivers the services to the members of the SF program by means of a combination of predefined tools, strategies, and procedures. I would like to argue that these means to achieve the ends—the goals and objectives of the SF program—are not strong enough to make the program or the forestation program a sustainable one.

The SF program is a *package* program that is based on predetermined procedures or project design. Thus, it is not a site-specific or situation-oriented process. Rather the program tries to offer universal cure for both poverty and environmental degradation in Bangladesh. The organization disburses European Union's money to the SF members, the poor women, to achieve EU's agenda of increased food security. The program is not created and also not defined by the women themselves. The women are chosen by the BRAC management according to the predetermined quota based on the amount of fund available from the EU's Food Security Unit. The process of selection thus omits many hardcore poor women. Moreover, as the program focuses exclusively on women, it cannot be a mass-movement since it excludes the participation of the poor rural men.

The *project design* used by the SF program seems weak. BRAC envisions achieving the objective of increased food security through the agroforestry program where the women plant both trees for timber and vegetable plants for sustained food supply. However, the BRAC management cannot provide full irrigational facilities, and have still some difficulty to make the vegetable planting a regular feature of the agroforestry program. This program operates on an informal basis with an exception of very regular field visits by the SF program officials to ensure the planting of a projected number of trees and their maintenance. As a matter of fact, the program design is mainly based on project appraisals or the written reports prepared by the BRAC officials. The project appraisals may well be seen as project proposals as they try to justify the financial costs of the program. The reports are meant for the Food Security Unit for further flow of funds from them, not for the betterment of the SF program itself. Thus, the project design leaves no room for flexibility. As a result the '*task*' of social

forestry is forcibly fitted into the organization, not the other way around. In this context, the BRAC management does not want to take any risk by taking up new experiments in tree plantation. Replication at least, for them, guarantees continued funds from the European Union.

BRAC has a large contingent of Social Forestry program staff who carry out duties with great punctuality and responsibility. But the quality of the SF program staff is questionable. At the bottom and the middle level management, the Area Manager, the Program Organizer (Social Forestry) and the Regional Manager have bachelors or master's degrees in any discipline. The Program Organizer (grassroots) is mostly a high school graduate or at most, a college graduate. Their involvement in Social Forestry program does not add any practicality to their academic backgrounds since they do not have any training in forest management. They become foresters with five-day training at TARC. The officials that I interviewed at the middle and bottom level could hardly explain the basic meanings of 'sustainable forestry' however difficult it may be to define the concept. They are the ones who explain the need for sustainable forestry to the rural women. The Regional Sector Specialists (social forestry) are the only SF officials with academic degrees in forestry. The RSS has little authority to implement his knowledge in forestry however, since his principal function is to carry out instructions coming from the upper management and sending information collected at the ground level field offices. The upper management varies—the Director of RDP is an experienced person in rural development in Bangladesh but has scanty knowledge in forest management and planning. The Sector Specialist in Social Forestry who often been regarded as the top person in SF with adequate technical expertise has both academic and practical experience in social forestry and more particularly, in agroforestry. The knowledge gaps that exist at present between the upper level management, a section of the middle level management and the majority of middle and bottom level managers is often reflected in the reluctance of the latter to convincingly approach the former to convey new technical strategy (e.g. experiment with new varieties of plants for vegetation etc.).

For a successful forestry program, there should be a good match between all levels of management and between the management and the beneficiaries of that program. In BRAC's case, there is good communication between the field level officials and the middle management through regular meetings and exchange of opinions. However, there is hardly any communications between the field level expertise and the upper management. There is clear tendency in the upper management to ignore the professional knowledge of the grassroots level POs. Due to their limited technical knowledge in forestry, the field level SF workers cannot render effective technical advice to the program participants. The *match* between the field level workers and the women beneficiaries should be a good one, if the objective is to achieve sustainable forestry.

Table 1. Theoretical features of forestry programs of BRAC and LBMFS

Dimensions of forestry program	BRAC	LBMFS
Goals and objectives	Poverty alleviation through increased food security; improvement of environment by planting fast growing trees	Demonstration of sustainable forest management through democratic process of participation of forest stakeholders; fusion of First Nation and non-FN resource management knowledge
Strategies and tools	Skilled forestry expertise to provide technical assistance to the women; a network of relationships between the government agencies, the BRAC, the donor, and the women members of the SF program	Collaboration between different forest stakeholders; exchange of knowledge and information between stakeholders with the organization's mediation; the organization works as a neutral party
Public participation	Active participation of poor women in the planning and decision-making process; devolution of authority from the upper management to the lower level to foster collective participation of the management and the women members	Open participation of the mass including the First Nations; an enabling partnership Board that represents different communities and values in equal terms; decision-making process is democratic and collective
Land tenure arrangements	Project based on leasing land from different sources; leased out to the women with written documents and with terms/conditions; precise agreement on share of the produce; lack of favorable government land tenure policy acknowledged	Does not deal with actual land although feels the need for a demonstration land; landowners as partners in the Board; possibility of a demonstration parcel of land
Donor dependency	Yes—dependent on European Commission's Food Security Unit; half-yearly progress reports to the donor by the organization	Yes—the program initiated and funded by the federal government

Table 2. Practical features of forestry programs of BRAC and LBMFS

Dimensions of forestry program	BRAC	LBMFS
Goals and objectives	Monthly wage is the major attraction for the women; irregular planting of vegetables in agroforestry, no constant supply of food; planting foreign trees without prior scientific research	Too many goals and objectives without a common understanding of SFM by all partners; opposing FN and non-FN forest management values
Strategies and tools	Unskilled forestry expertise mostly; no network of relationships with other agencies; women's dependency on the organization	Unstable organizational structure; lack of appropriate forestry management skill in the staff; failure to establish interactive network among the partners
Public participation	Selection process of women members is filtering; organization's neglect of women's knowledge or opinion of trees; complete lack of participation of the women and the lower level management in the decision-making process	Token participation by the FN people; quality of FN representation at the Board is poor; FNs have the autonomy and political strength to withdraw from the program; FNs' communication network has greatly enhanced through their presence at the Baord
Land tenure arrangements	Uncertain, vulnerable and vague; women participants are not informed by the organization properly of their share in the produce and ownership of land	Complicated; strong possibility of a demonstration parcel of land because of the presence of different landowning partners at the Board
Donor dependency	Donor-down SF program; one-way accountability to donor; zero accountability to the women members	Apathetic role of the federal government; uncertain funds; one-way accountability to donor

Unlike BRAC's Social Forestry program, the sustainable forestry program of Long Beach Model Forest Society has a stronger technological approach. Thus, LBMFS's sustainable forest management program does not come in a predetermined package, although an external agent, i.e, the federal government of Canada, initiated the concept of SFM. From the beginning, the participants of the LBMF program, including the First Nations, have been able to exercise their democratic rights in the decision-making process. The creation, modifications, and again recreations of goals and objectives may be little too complicated for the organization's capacity to handle but it proves the strength of the organization, or to be precise, the partners at the Board of Directors possess. This very power or strength of the participants is independent of the initiator of the project, i.e., the

federal government. The LBMF program is broad and vague, unlike BRAC's SF program, in terms of the concept of participation. As it does not clearly define the borders of participation, rather encourages participation on a mass level, the functional process of the organization has remained blurred—even to the participating members.

From the beginning, the project design of the sustainable forestry program of the LBMFS suffered from certain weaknesses. The constantly changing socio-political and cultural scenario in the Long Beach area (the treaty struggle of the First Nations, the formation of Central Regional Board to supervise and direct the land control and management process in the area, the entrance of Weyerhaeuser as a big forest land owner but also as a potential danger to the local forest dependent communities etc.) have made it increasingly difficult (however, not entirely impossible) for the organization to act on the basis of a concrete and stable project design. Therefore, although the underlying primary intention has been to achieve sustainable forestry management, the identification of the criteria and indicators of SFM have yet not been achieved by the organization. Like BRAC, the LBMFS has so far prepared annual progress reports for the Canadian Forest Service to ensure funds for the next year, but it has failed to exhibit any useful results in its primary task—to develop a model of sustainable forest management. Unlike BRAC, however, the whole concept of LBMFS developed around its task and despite limited success, the organization has continuously tried to fulfill its goal to achieve SFM in the Clayquot Sound and Berkeley Sound.

A major obstacle in the fulfillment of goals and objectives of Long Beach Model Forest Society is, like BRAC, perhaps the qualifications of some of the holding major positions. It is quite evident from the field visits that many staff, including several General Managers and the Assistant General Manager, were appointed hastily and based on local-community friendship and familiarity. This has led ineffective functioning and/or influence of those people. One former General Manager openly admitted (who later represented one of the sectors at the Board of Directors) his appointment as GM as wrong and inappropriate. The educational qualifications, experience, and technical expertise of many staff have been called into questions time and again. When the staff and some of the prominent Board directors have had difficulty in understanding and analyzing important issues such as Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), Sustainable Forest Management etc., how can they explain these issues to the broader society at a general level?

Contingency theory projects a good match between all levels of management of an organization in order for that organization to be succeeding in doing what it wants to do. From that point of view, the match between different levels of management of LBMFS, the staff, the Board of directors, the Administration Committee is not congenial at all. With weak project design and sometimes professionally incompetent staff, the organization has developed a rather bad match between the management and the participants. As noted, there is limited communication between the staff and the Administration Committee/Board directors. Like BRAC, the Board of Directors of LBMFS ignore and avoid the professional knowledge of the staff as exemplified by limited

interactive meetings between these two levels of management. One of the pre-requisites here should be to ensure meaningful communication between the staff and the Board and the Administration Committee and this may eventually produce a good match.

Structure:

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is a large organization. The major sectors of its operations are the Rural Development Program (RDP), Education, Health, and Credit. The Social Forestry program is only a small unit within the RDP. Like any other sector, BRAC's SF sector has also three-tier organizational structure: the upper management at the head office, the middle management at the regional offices, and the bottom management at the field offices. BRAC claims that its organizational structure is flat and organic meaning the structure is decentralized and the upper management devolves authority to the middle and bottom level management for effective decision making process. As the Social Forestry program grew larger in terms of horizontal expansion of forestry plantations, separate divisions were created for the management of the program, separate from the organization's other sectoral operations. The head office has transferred the authority to the middle managers (the RM, RSS) and the field level managers (the POs, both sectoral and grassroots, AM, Team Leader etc.) to take spontaneous decisions at the ground level. In reality, decentralization of administration does not ensure bottom-up decision making in BRAC's SF program. If they at all take any decision, question arises, what kind of decisions are they taking?

To seek answers to this question, it is necessary to have a look at the duties and responsibilities of the middle and lower level management again. The Program Organizer (grassroots) is the direct link between the women members of the SF program and the BRAC management. The information he gathers is passed on to the Program Organizer (SF) and the Area Manager. This information is mostly *quantitative* in nature—how many trees are dead, how many are alive, how many should be replaced and which members are not doing their job properly and who are. This quantitative information is then passed on the middle managers who then make field visits accordingly and again, send their opinions with the data collected to the upper management. Therefore, the lower and the middle level SF officials work as *informers and mediators*. They do not take decisions on their own. The middle level managers at best can temporarily stop the program any particular situation depending on how negative is the quantitative information of that area. They can only proceed again if they receive green signals from the upper management. The signals, "stop, do not go ahead" and "go ahead with the program" are decided and sent by only the upper management.

BRAC's "flat" and "organic" structures, as showed by Lovell (1992) displays, therefore, an *administrative decentralization*, but perhaps no devolution of authority from the upper management to the lower one. In all cases, the major decisions are obviously taken by the upper management of the SF program and finally approved by the governing body of BRAC. The administrative structure of BRAC's SF program resembles Mintzberg's (1979) "machine bureaucracy" where

the duties of the middle and lower level management are rigorous but routinized and absolutely predictable. However, BRAC continues to profess participatory Social Forestry even in this scenario with little or no problem-solving relationships between the local staff and the rural women, even though this contradicts its objectives of development—'participation', 'conscientization' and 'empowerment'. The donor pressure has resulted in scaling up of the program, like any of BRAC's other programs, but the existing managerial capacity has failed to cope with the rapid expansion. The Sector Specialist commented that it is not possible for BRAC management to keep track of the details of all the social forestry plantations around the country. The management even does not have a formal list of all the forestry programs and they could not show me any when I wanted to see one. The policies, changes, and the decisions are solely made by the central management and the middle, more particularly the low level management is hardly informed of this process. Thus, the change of the designation from 'Program Assistant' to the 'Program Organizer' of the grassroots level liaison worker is not conveyed properly by the central management. In one of the Area Offices that I visited, the AM continued to address the Program Organizer as the Program Assistant until I told him about the change. Also, the upper management could not explain why this change in title was made because at the ground level, the duties of the Program Organizer has remained the exactly same as before. This actually confirms Wood's finding that only the upper most management knows what is going on in BRAC's programs whereas the middle and lower level managers can only guess but again with little understanding.

Unlike BRAC's Social Forestry program, the organizational structure of LBMFS is simple and not multi-layered. At least in theory, there is no top, middle, and lower management. According to contingency theory if the organization is small, the structure remains simple with fewer divisions and the authority to make decisions is not made decentralized. It remains centralized. However, in the case of LBMFS, a relatively small structure (compared to that of BRAC) has not necessarily led to a supreme central authority that takes unilateral decisions. On the contrary, the Board of Directors, the Administration Committee, the staff, and other related forms of management in Long Beach Model Forest Society take consensus-based decisions based on mutual discussion and agreement. A major problem that has delimited the organizational capacity to work freely and constructively is the conflict between the different levels of staff.

Environmental Nexus and Resource Dependence:

Task Environment:

For the Social Forestry porgram, BRAC's task environment is composed of donor and government agencies. To be precise, donor dependency dominates the SF program's task environment. In general, the task environment seems to have unavoidable influence on the SF program.

The forestation program of BRAC started in late 1970s with the nursery project in collaboration with the Forest Department of the Bangladesh

government. Gradually, the program became diversified and evolved into multi-faceted Social Forestry program in the 1990s. The Agroforestry and the Block Plantation components of the SF program are directly linked to the European Union's Food Security Unit. The EU has been traditionally helping the Bangladesh government in carrying out different rural development projects that include the Food For Work program. They stopped funding the government mainly because of corruption and inefficiency of the government bureaucracy. They started looking for NGOs who could distribute the EU's money, not the food, to the poor people. Knowing that, BRAC came up with the proposal for Agroforestry and the Block Plantation programs saying that the poor women will take part in these programs that is relevant to their development principle of focusing on poor women in rural development programs. Since the beginning of these programs, EU's pressure and BRAC's dependency on them for resources are quite evident.

The relationship with the donor is asymmetric. Although the donor in this case does not decide on the project itself (but BRAC does), it continuously puts pressure on the organization for half-yearly reports for the Food Security Unit. Under pressure, BRAC struggles to prepare the reports that are but brief financial accounts of how the money is spent in the last six months. The results of the forestry program must be extremely positive in these reports to ensure further financial assistance from the EU. Since BRAC has to give detailed description of the financial expenses in the program, it sidelines the social and political issues of women's active participation in the program and their empowerment. However, the EU is hardly interested in these socio-political issues and the sustainable forestry in Bangladesh and therefore is quite content to receive the financial accounts from the BRAC management. The organization makes reports for the Food Security Unit but makes no report to the women members who are sustained by the program. Accountability is explicitly *donor-down* and again, one way. The European Union is not accountable to either BRAC or the women beneficiaries of the SF program. The European Union's major intention is to see the SF program expanding as fast as possible to enroll more and more poor women under the program. It negatively affects the quality of the whole program because BRAC, working under EU's pressure, focuses on the quantity of members, not the quality of the sustainable forestry program in Bangladesh.

The upper management of the SF program shows an explicit tendency to avoid government agencies, particularly the Forest Department, as much as possible. As previously noted, BRAC had a collaborative forestry program with the Forest Department in the past but as the program grew large, the professional jealousy of the Forest Department increased. Now, the situation is such that the donor trusts BRAC much more than it does the government; therefore, there is a minimum guarantee of funds from the donor for the SF program. The donor also pressures the government to let BRAC work free of any bureaucratic and administrative constraints and therefore, BRAC shows little or no interest in working with the government in carrying out collaborative forestry program. As a result, there is almost no institutional cooperation between the government agencies and BRAC, which produces unilateral dependency of women members

on BRAC. In fact, the magnitude of poverty that circles the lives of these women makes them helpless and fosters the creation of more patron-client relationships between the BRAC management and the women beneficiaries.

The relations between the BRAC management and the government have negatively impacted the SF program. The only issue that relates the government and the BRAC management is the approval of donor funds by the NGOAB as quickly as possible. As they avoid and ignore each other, when BRAC really needs help from the government, the government remains inactive. The result is that the Forest Department does not give land to BRAC for forestry, although it could. This leads to uncertain agreements between the BRAC and the local government administrations for strip lands on the roadsides. If the relations between the government and the BRAC continues to be difficult as it is now, the future of the forestry plantations will remain extremely uncertain as the government has the ultimate authority to decide on the leasing agreements and the produce, the trees that grow on the roadsides. The organization's incapacity to create functional and cooperative relations with the government impacts the fate of the women members most directly who have joined the SF program with so much of hope and aspirations.

Long Beach Model Forest Society's task environment consists of all the participating sectors including the major donor of the program—the federal government. Like BRAC, the LBMFS exposes the weakness of being donor-dependent. However, LBMFS is in much better position for bettering as opposed to BRAC in the sense that all the stakeholders in its sustainable forestry program have the potential to support the program financially in a collective manner. Despite much more freedom that being enjoyed by the LBMFS than BRAC, an asymmetric relationship still exists between the federal government and the LBMFS. The organization is obligated to produce annual progress report for the Canadian Forest Service almost similarly to BRAC's progress report to the European Union's Food Security Unit. However, as we have noticed in the case of BRAC, there is no accountability from the BRAC management to the poor rural women or the participants of its Social Forestry program, the LBMFS has to answer the questions raised by the participating stakeholders including the First Nations. Nevertheless, the quality of the accountability is rather poor in the case of LBMFS.

A section of the LBMFS staffs have shown reluctance to work with the provincial government of British Columbia, deemed by others as one the important partners at the Board of Directors. Surprisingly, the reason for avoiding the provincial government here is almost the same as BRAC's avoidance of the Forest Department or other government agencies—the fear of loosing control of the forestry programs to the government agencies.

Institutional Environment:

The institutional environment, the government policy and the cultural norms, are not congenial for a sustainable forestry program in Bangladesh. There in no clearly defined government policy on social forestry although the

Government of Bangladesh came up with the Asian Development Bank assisted Forestry Master Plan in 1993. This is the first major forest policy in Bangladesh. In the Master Plan, the NGOs are given more freedom and are promised more cooperation for people's forestry by the government but under certain conditions. The choice of tree species to be planted in the forestry programs is determined by the government. Thus, the choice species are commercial trees and are of foreign in nature. Any NGO that wants to promote Social Forestry has to maintain the choices within its forestry planning as BRAC has done. Therefore, BRAC's rigidity about planting eucalyptus, and other leguminous trees is an obvious reflection of government's policy; in the end, it is not really a BRAC decision.

Lack of any clearly defined law about the ownership of forest products that grow on leased land may jeopardize the SF program. Without any existing law, BRAC can not guarantee the women participants that the trees will be theirs after ten or fifteen years, although BRAC does give guarantee. When the trees are very small, the ownership of tree or tree products is not major issue to BRAC management. But given the scarcity of land and trees, it may be reasonable to anticipate a tense situation when the trees will grow big and will be ready to be felled. Considering the situations in rural Bangladesh where people fight over scarce resources, conflict between the women members, the non-member villagers, and principal landowners may not be ruled out.

Cultural norms of hierarchical relationships pervade every stage of BRAC's organizational structure and its operation. It actually works in favor of BRAC. According to the cultural norms, BRAC officials/workers are revered by the women participants because socially and also politically and of course, in terms of education, the BRAC people are much more knowledgeable; knowledge that is always good and positive. The women who are ignorant and illiterate thus follow the instructions coming from those people, without any resistance. During the fieldwork, BRAC officials, even the Program Organizers (grassroots) with limited academic qualifications were critical of women's lack of knowledge about what is good and what is bad for them. This attitude of BRAC management is instilled into women's minds at the very beginning of the program with five-day training in forestry activities and during introductory meetings between the BRAC officials and the women beneficiaries in Village Organizations. However, the interactive conditions are not rigid at all. On the contrary, despite BRAC's tendency to ignore women's traditional knowledge of trees, the women members are happy enough to be able to call the BRAC workers 'brother', or 'sister' (*bhai, apa, dada, didi*) that is otherwise impossible with the government officials.[77] The knowledge gaps between the BRAC officials and the women members ensure the cultural norms of superiority of BRAC people and the inferiority of the women members that are socially accepted by all—the donor, BRAC management and the women. The daily relations/interactions between the BRAC officials and the women and indulgence on the BRAC part to let the women address them cordially do not remove the accepted social and cultural norms. As regards the top-down

[77] The usual norms of communications for the poor people with the government officials in Bangladesh are very rigid and formal. Thus, the poor people have to address the government officials as 'sir' or 'madam.'

decision making process that BRAC exhibits, it is no irregularity but quite natural. In existence of these cultural norms, therefore, it should not be expected that the demands of the women will be easily met or the field level managers will have authority to take situation-specific decisions. It will be always the upper management of BRAC who will decide and shape the forestry program, be it good or be it not good.

For the Long Beach Model Forest Society, despite all the odds, the institutional environment actually strengthens its possibility to develop a model of sustainable forest management. The federal government policy does not ensure a demonstration parcel of land for the organization but, by the same token, it does not negate the chances of getting one in the future. It is up to the functional and professional skills of the staff and other management personnel in the LBMFS to manipulate the situations and obtain some land from the major land holding partners at the Board like Weyerhaeuser Ltd., or Interfor—the big forest companies. In other words, the federal government does not interfere with the land management by the Central Region Board or the provincial government. The provincial government also is willing to commit some land for the sustainable forestry project of LBMFS but only requirement it pushes for is the agreement between all the local communities with one single purpose and objective to work together. Again, it depends on the capacity of the LBMFS management to bring different interests together to work under a common goal of demonstrating the criteria and indicators of SFM in the region.

Unlike the hierarchical cultural norms in Bangladesh, the cultural norms in Canada are based on tolerance for multi-cultural values and acceptance of democratic rights of all people. Therefore, the existing norms should work in favor of the First Nations communities who participate in the sustainable forestry program of LBMFS. If the rural women in BRAC's Social Forestry program silently agree to what they are told by the Social Forestry officers who rank higher than them in social class and status, the First Nations people or communities in LBMFS object to what they do not like in the organizational activities. This capacity for self-assertion stems from the historical struggle for land and treaty rights. If the number of First Nation people who have held different major positions at the LBMFS is considered, then at least in this case they do not deserve to be called a 'marginal' section of the local population. Instead, they are relatively powerful and have a significant potential to set the future directions of the LBMFS. The claims of the First Nations to incorporate their Traditional Ecological Knowledge into forest management practice is just not a mere claim. It has led to creation of Working Groups to focus on this question and the other members at the Board of Directors are very well aware of that.

Collaboration theory: The Nature of Collaboration in the LBMFS and BRAC

The federal government first convened the idea of a national Model Forest Program. Initially, the federal government helped the Model Forest Program, including the Long Beach Model Forest Program, to identify primary stakeholders

of forests relative to the area of the particular Model Forest Program. For the LBMF program, the role of identifying the broad range of forest stakeholders and bring them to round table for discussion was soon assigned to the LBMFS in its combined structural form—the staff, the Board of Directors, and the Administration Committee. Since the beginning of the LBMF program, the preconditions of a collaborative process were well present.

There is a common problem domain or objective. This is to bring sustainable forest management practice into reality in the Long Beach area—the Clayquot Sound and the Berkeley Sound. There are autonomous stakeholders who are engaged in a collaborative process toward attaining SFM practice under structured rules and norms as laid by the LBMFS. Then, the question is, what has gone wrong?

To answer this question, I begin with the problem domain. The problem domain of the LBMF program is merged into many local socio-political and geo-ecological issues. The indigenous people in British Columbia had already been fighting against the provincial government and the forest industries when the Long Beach Model Forest Program was launched officially in 1992. Different political events like the Land Use Decision, Interim Measures Agreement and the Creation of the Central Region Board were continually defining and redefining the SFM in Clayquot Sound. Therefore, although the LBMF program was initiated in 1992, it could not start working until 1994. In between these two years, the First Nations, the provincial government and the forest industries, together with numerous other groups tried to establish some criteria of SFM through the Clayquot Sound Scientific Panel Recommendation. However, the creation of the Clayquot Sound Scientific Panel did not resolve the problem; instead, I believe it led to a bigger political problem. Now, with all these regulations in operation and the industrial logging no longer the dominant, at least theoretically, forest practice in the Clayquot Sound, all the forest stakeholders have started asserting their own rights in forest resource use. The FNs, being the principal opposition to the dominant industrial logging, have put their demands of Hahuulhii—the Traditional System of Ownership and Resource Management of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth people. The creation of the Central Region Board, the Clayquot Sound Scientific Panel, Interim Measures Agreements etc. have not abolished the industrial forest management practice; they have only delimited the practice to some extent. So, big forest industries are still there, doing commercial logging. Therefore, the problem domain—the sustainable forest management—set by the federal government in creation of the Model Forest Program in Canada, is far too complicated in the context of British Columbia. It has never been easy for the LBMFS to mediate between the two completely opposing views of SFM at the negotiating table. However, despite the fact that the problem domain in the Long Beach area is complicated and turbulent (and also, is not well-defined in the case of the LBMF program), the effort shown by the LBMFS to bring diverse forest stakeholders at the table should be applauded.

The stakeholders come to the table with full autonomy and also with the true intention to negotiate with each other. This is manifested in the fact that the directors at the Board of Directors are all volunteers and not paid by the

organizations. At the beginning of the LBMFS, all sectors had considerable enthusiasm to participate in this collaborative process. Then, with the organization's inability to do something 'at the ground level' about the SFM practice in the LBMF area, the enthusiasm soon has been replaced by frustration. Thus, as we have seen, the First Nations were involved in the LBMFS from the beginning and saw something positive in the program initially, but the interest started to fade away as the number of paid employment of FN youths in different projects went down. Also, the LBMFS is only one of the interests in their broader agenda and not a major one since they are already involved in treaty negotiations with the provincial government and joint venture forest management with the forest industries. The First Nations have beginning to show their full autonomy in the process, and thus, thinking of quitting the LBMF program.

The major cause of frustration stems from an existence of weak and inefficient organizational structure that has failed to create strong leadership within the organization, and more particularly, among the organizational staff. In collaboration, there should be structured rules and norms to be shared by all stakeholders, as explained by Wood and Gray. For the LBMFS, the process of building a shared structure and norms is hampered by haphazard appointment of the General Managers from the beginning of the operation of the organizations. Only a stable and strong structure could produce intended results. But with constant restructuring of the LBMFS and prevalent personal rivalry and local political tensions the LBMFS could hardly produce any shared rules or norms. Not surprisingly, then, the goals and objectives of the LBMF program were created and changed so many times in a short period. With multiple revisions of the goals and objectives, they became even more complicated. However, it may be seen as the incapacity of the organization (particularly, its staff) to analyze the ever-changing socio-economic and political scenario of the Clayquot Sound. Sound. This incapacity that generated from the inefficiency of some of the staff, has affected the operational quality of the LBMFS for a long time. Due to this structural weakness, a major section of the staff failed to establish positive and cooperative relationships with the Board and the Administration Committee.

The stakeholders in the LBMFS have taken many actions that have resulted in few good projects like the GIS, the RIC, the Hydroriparian project etc. However, while these projects have benefited different communities (the first two projects at least were beneficial to the FNs), they may not be viewed as 'domain oriented' tasks, directly. What could be most effective toward influencing policy making in land use and management in Clayquot Sound is practical demonstration of the Sustainable Forest Management by the LBMFS. The LBMFS was unable to convince the provincial government as to the importance of community forestry in the LBMF area. This failure actually reveals the lack of cooperative 'mutual action' by the different levels of the LBMFS—its staff, the Board of Directors, and the members of the Administration Committee and the at the grassroots, the general public.

The apparent failure of the LBMFS to take on the role of a 'third party' organization lies in its ineffective role as the secondary convener of the LBMF program. From the beginning of the program the organization has failed to show

fairness in terms of exercising authority between different levels of management within the organization. The appointment of five general managers in the space of as many years suggests a highly fragile organizational structure that eventually led to the wide-ranging criticism of the LBMFS's legitimacy as the secondary convener. The personal clash between the GM and the AGM has affected the functional capacity of the whole organization. These things might have fuelled a process where the LBMFS, or more precisely, the staff lost trustworthiness among the stakeholders. In the absence of strong credibility, therefore, the LBMFS with all its stakeholders have little power to convince the provincial government, the First Nations, and the forest industries to undertake a sustainable forest project.

It would be unfair, nevertheless, to put all the blames on the LBMFS for the failure. The role of the primary convener, the federal government is difficult to understand. The federal government provides the organization with funds. Its responsibility seems to end there since it has remained 'indifferent' toward the whole program. The federal government has not been 'autocratic' but it has not been 'persuasive' either as reported earlier by Sinclair et al. The federal government had shifted the entire burden of persuading the stakeholders from its shoulders to that of the LBMFS's without even ensuring the background to do that job. It has let the organization's infighting go on and on that has made the situation from bad to worse. The federal government should seriously question its role and also the underlying reason for creating the Model Forest Program. In order to achieve a sustainable forest management premise in the LBMF region, the organization that it has bestowed the responsibilities to do that, the LBMFS, should be sustainable first. For that, it needs a strong structure with qualified staff to cope with the complex socio-political scenario.

A collaborative effort could bring positive outcomes if the interests of the stakeholders are either shared or differing, but not opposing. In the LBMF program the stakeholders do not show shared interests. As a matter of fact, the LBMFS lacks one of the major criteria of an effective collaboration process: *there are no clearly defined and shared common interests among the stakeholders*. The interests of the First Nations and the forest industries are clearly opposing. The provincial government is pressured by the wider society to consider integrating social and cultural values of different communities into industrial logging practice. Surely, the provincial government is willing to do that but not without strong commitment and collective efforts from the communities at the ground level. It is also evident from the study that it is not easy to gain consensus on forest management in the Clayquot Sound. The FNs are sticking to their demand for exercising TEK, and the forest industries have not yet given any land to the LBMFS to practice forestry controlled by the communities. In this situation, it is necessary for the primary convener of the LBMF program, the federal government, to take initiatives that would help the LBMFS to create an atmosphere conducive to the goal of sustainable forest management practice.

The Social Forestry program of BRAC cannot be explained by collaboration theory as thoroughly as the LBMFS. However, there are some similarities between these two programs in terms of the functioning of the programs in collaboration with or without others. Like LBMFS, the problem

domain or objective for BRAC's SF program is achieving sustainable forestry in Bangladesh. The idea of participatory forestry with the sustainable forest management rhetoric was initiated first by the government of Bangladesh almost immediately after the Rio Summit in 1992. The government wanted all the NGOs to come forward to achieve this goal and work together. Like LBMFS, thus, BRAC could perhaps be called the 'secondary' convener of the idea of sustainable forest management with the government itself being the primary one. However, the federal government in the case of LBMFS have dual roles—primary convener of the program and the major donor as well. For BRAC, the major donor of the program, the European Union, has only the financial interest in the program (i.e., their money being well spent by BRAC); it does not have any long-term interest in the sustainable forestry in Bangladesh. The women in Social Forestry program could enormously benefit from a collaborative arrangement like their First Nations counterpart in LBMFS. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee has all the capacity to act as a 'third party' mediator between the women at the grassroots level and the other agencies including the government ones to develop a strong network of collaborative forestry programs. It could definitely reduce women's dependence on BRAC and also, BRAC's unilateral dependence on the European Union's Food Security Unit. Unlike the LBMFS, BRAC is in a better position to pursue a multi-party collaborative forestry program because interests of all these parties including the women in rural areas do not oppose to each other significantly. Whatever differences exist between the women and the BRAC management regarding the choice of species can easily be removed by meaningful discussion between all the parties involved. This way, BRAC could gain as well; this could be a wonderful opportunity for the organization to get land from the Forest Department to venture more diverse approaches in its forestry program.

The above discussion may have helped to understand two important things regarding BRAC's Social Forestry and LBMFS's Sustainable Forestry programs: there are considerable gaps between the theory and practice of these programs that pose threats to a sustainable forestry and these differences are largely due to the *external* environmental pressure on the organizations. As an organization, BRAC displays all the features of a perfectly functional bureaucracy. However, over the years its dependency on donor funds has shaped its functional nature of the structures including that of the SF program. Now, the principal duty of the SF program structure is to send accountability reports to the donor that in turn determines the rigid top-down decision making process in the SF program. In doing that, BRAC undermines its own rhetoric of participatory forestry and environmental improvement. Again, the objectives of social forestry are weakened by a project design and technology that are useful to produce half-yearly reports for the donor but may not be conducive for a sustainable forestry program. However, the organization's dependence on foreign aids and its asymmetric struggle to please the donor is not inherently wrong given the situation in Bangladesh. Like any other non-governmental organization engaged in rural development in Bangladesh, BRAC has to depend on foreign donations until there is good and constructive working relationship between the government and the organization. Even after that, foreign assistance is obviously necessary since the

government of Bangladesh itself is perpetually dependent on foreign aid. Nevertheless, joint collaboration between BRAC and the government agencies like the Forest Department to pursue sustainable forestry would bring more enduring results than BRAC's absolutely donor-dependent SF program. The social forestry program of BRAC should not in any way be regarded as a failed one from the perspective of the above discussion. It is not corrupt (by local standards), its staff displays a high quality work ethic that is otherwise absent in the Bangladesh culture, it provides reasonable accountability of the uses of funds to the European Union, and most importantly, it continues to struggle to improve the living standards of the rural women. But given the lofty goals of participation and sustainability, it necessarily falls short.

Like BRAC, the existing gaps between the theory and practice of LBMFS's goals and objectives, First Nation's participation, and land tenure arrangements are significantly influenced by the external environment, but the organizational incapacity to handle the ever changing socio-political scenario concerning the First Nations and non-First Nations impedes the organization to push forward the sustainable forest agenda. The organization's dependence on the federal government and latter's passive role in the program is not conducive in the long run. However, gladly, the LBMFS is not entirely dependent on the federal government; it gets money from its partners as well for different projects. But if the organization's staff fails to get rid of their internal rivalry and if the organization fails to maintain a stable and skilled manpower, the partners may soon lose interest in the program as the First Nations have started to.

Despite these apparent limitations, there are rooms for improvement for both programs. These organizations just have to figure out the best possible options that will maximize the possibility of sustainable forestry for the marginal peoples.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The sustainable forestry models in both the developing and the developed worlds are, in theory, a plausible means toward achieving varied ends. In the developing world, sustainable forestry (in its different forms—social forestry, community forestry, co-managed forestry, people's forestry etc.) is viewed as a possible remedy to rural poverty, rapidly depleting natural resources, energy crisis, and as a vehicle for economic prosperity. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and the national governments in the developing countries have placed significant emphasis on the culture of sustainable forestry. In a similar manner, the sustainable forestry paradigm provides the developed countries with at least one possible model of sustainable forest management that incorporates the issues of greater accountability of professional foresters and more active participation of the forest-dependent communities in the forest management decision-making process. In both contexts, overwhelming concern for the local communities can be seen as the pivotal philosophy of sustainable forestry programs (Mallik and Rahman 1994).

In the present study, two case studies were presented. The Social Forestry program of Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee in Bangladesh and the Long Beach Model Forest of the Long Beach Model Forest Society in Canada. In the case of BRAC, the focus is on rural women who are regarded as the marginal section of the population in Bangladesh. The Long Beach Model Forest Society concentrates, heavily, on the First Nations of the Long Beach area and, again, for their marginal nature in the forest management practice in the region. The major objectives of the study were to show the gaps between theoretical projection and the application of theories in three dimensions of these two forestry programs: the goals and objectives, the public participation, and the land tenure arrangements within which these two programs operate. Besides providing general description of the goals and objectives, public participation, and the land tenure arrangements under these two different programs, contingency theory, collaboration theory, and resource dependency theory are used to partially explain the causes of any gap between the theory and practice of these dimensions.

Theoretically, the management of BRAC's SF program views poverty alleviation and the improvement of environmental degradation as major goals and objectives of the SF program. The argument that BRAC tries to elaborate is that poverty of the rural women will be alleviated through planting trees that the women can sell after few years. In between, the women will plant vegetables and other plants for their personal consumption and for sale in the market. The beneficiaries of the SF program will also be given a monthly wage for taking care of the trees that should cover the operating costs of the trees as well. Therefore, with more trees on the ground and with a regular flow of money from different sources, the women will put less pressure on the consumption of trees as fuel, fodder, and food. It means that the increased food security of the women, thanks to BRAC's agroforestry, block plantations, road-side plantations etc. will

eventually lead to a better environment with less deforestation but more trees. The practical situations, however, slightly vary from these theoretical aspirations. In reality, BRAC management falls short of providing proper strategies and tools to achieve those goals and objectives. Thus, for example, it is seen that the women do not plant vegetables on a regular basis for lack of water and inexpensive seeds. The BRAC management also cannot provide strong technical support because the SF workers are not properly equipped with forestry knowledge. Again, there is little awareness among the women of environmental degradation or deforestation. However, this lack of awareness in imbedded in the totality of an agrarian culture of Bangladesh where people really do not view the physical environment in terms of a holistic combination of man and nature. Although BRAC is trying hard to make the rural people aware of the consequences of rapidly depleting natural resources and environmental degradation, it should take serious steps to ensure that the foreign tree species that its forestry program plants do not further endanger the environment. Also, the organization would do much better if some meaningful collaborative arrangements with the government organizations could be made. However, for this is to happen, it is the government and its bureaucracies who should adopt a positive approach because BRAC has kept its doors open to those agencies as exemplified its other development programs (poultry, education, health etc.). The organization's dependence on donor funds simply explains the overall situations in Bangladesh; it is not really BRAC's fault. In fact, given the culture of rampant corruption, BRAC has earned the trust of donors from across the world for being honest and sincere in producing the financial expenditure progress reports. Doing so, BRAC may have lost close contacts with the rural women from who it badly needs support. Therefore, it should continue to rebuild accountable relationships with the poor rural members of the SF program. At the same time, BRAC should continue to reduce its asymmetric dependence on the European Union for funds.

The concept of public participation is practiced slightly differently in SF program than in other programs of BRAC. In theory, as the overall objective and development philosophy of BRAC, it emphasizes on the need for rural women's stronger participation in the SF program in order to achieve the desired success in the program. BRAC believes that the participation of women is guaranteed through their active engagement in planting trees solidified by their conversations and discussions with the BRAC officials in weekly meetings of the Village Organizations. The lower and the middle level management of the SF program are given full authority to take informed decisions at the field level, BRAC argues. Therefore, even if the final decisions are taken at the upper management level, they are based on collective action that begins with women's participation in VO meetings and further strengthened by communicative actions at the lower and middle level management. The reality is shrouded by the lofty goals of participation and the abstract nature of the measurement of sustainability. The cash wage becomes more important for the women members in place of intellectual participation since the program is short term and the financial gain seems only visible means to translate their physical presence in the program into real participation. Even this very different nature of participation should work for

BRAC and the women members in terms of long-term sustainability of forest management if the organization could ensure more long-term financial incentives for the rural women.

The land tenure arrangement in which the SF program operates is fragile and works against the poor women members. In the absence of any land leasing agreement with the Forest Department of the Bangladesh government, BRAC's SF management is forced to depend on other sources of land which are scanty: private land owners, BRAC's own land and the land leased from the government. In the absence of clearly formulated land tenure arrangement in Bangladesh, BRAC should develop a strong land leasing policy with clearly written and explained rules and regulations just in case of any potential land conflict between different parties in future. At the same time, the organization should have a strong marketing strategy to market the end products in the long run. These will create increased confidence in women members that may lead to increased motivation to protect the trees and continue to participate in the program.

The situations in the Social Forestry program of BRAC are explained by three organizational theories—contingency, resource dependency, and collaboration theory. It is argued that the pressures from the external environment that the SF management interacts with have eventually shaped the whole SF program. BRAC receives money from the European Union to run the SF program. The EU is hardly interested in the SF program itself, rather it is interested to see the money is well distributed among the poor women by BRAC. To prove that, BRAC produces half-yearly reports for the Food Security Unit (FSU) of EU. These reports are financial accounts of the SF program describing all the positive aspects of BRAC's effective management of the program. The managers from top to bottom are engaged in providing information and making routine reports for the FSU and in scaling up the program as rapidly as possible as demanded by the FSU. In doing that, the development of a strong management with appropriate knowledge resource for the forestry program is often undermined. In addition to extreme donor dependency, lack of any strong government policy regarding social forestry in Bangladesh and the cultural norms have a negative impact on the sustainability of the SF program. In other words, in the case of BRAC's SF program, the management struggles to cope with the external environmental situations in order to make sure that the program itself continues. A lack of collaboration with the government agencies only augment the above situations, leading to the belief that the Social Forestry program of BRAC can hardly be called a sustainable forestry project.

Like BRAC's Social Forestry program, the sustainable forestry program of the LBMFS shows significant disparities between the theory and practice of three dimensions—goals and objectives, the First Nations participation in the LBMF program, and the land tenure arrangements. Although the goals and objectives of the LBMFS have been changed several times since its inception in 1992, the major theme has remained the same. Thus, LBMFS tries to bring different forest stakeholders to the discussion table in the LBMF area. The principal goal is to develop a democratic forest management practice that would combine the forest management practice of two opposite interest groups—the First Nations and the

forest industries. The LBMFS believes that if these parties, together with other stakeholders, can work on a common forest management method then the social, cultural, environmental, and economic aspirations of the First Nations and the non-FN communities would not be impossible to achieve. Therefore, if the major goal of BRAC's SF program is to bring economic prosperity in the lives of poor rural women, the LBMF program emphasizes the democratic process in forest management that may eventually produce all kinds of economic and socio-political benefits for the participating groups. However, like BRAC, LBMFS lacks the organizational capacity to achieve the goals and objectives. It does not have a strong organizational structure; instead, the structure has been unstable from the beginning and has resulted in ineffective relationships with the major partners at the Board of Directors. Also, the creation of multiple goals and objectives and a series of semi-objectives have further complicated the whole process. The LBMFS has developed these goals and objectives without a proper understanding of the demands of different stakeholders. Now, when the organization (the management of its paid staff) claims to have better future in the endeavor, the First Nations and many other partners at the Board do not perceive any positive relationship between the First Nation goals of sustainable forestry and the goals of the forest industries.

The participatory process in the LBMFS is significantly different from that of the SF program of BRAC. Whereas in the BRAC case, the women participants are chosen and selected by BRAC and participation is shaped by their financial conditions (poverty), in the LBMFS the participation of the First Nations is shaped by their manifold power relations in the resource management in the region. However, the quality of FN participation is being questioned as the FN participants at the Board lack adequate technical and academic knowledge to interact with highly qualified forestry officials from different sectors—the federal government, provincial government and the forest industries. The FN representatives at the Board have not been accountable to their people at the grassroots and, for that, the FN representatives blame the vagueness and confusing goals and objectives of the LBMF program. Unlike the women in BRAC's SF program, the collaborative nature of the LBMF program has given the FN the opportunity to build social capital, and use it to attain their personal goals of resource management in the area.

The land tenure arrangements do not affect the LBMFS directly, since it does not deal with actual land like BRAC's SF program. Also, the land tenure system is not uncertain in the case of LBMF program as it is in BRAC's SF program. It is only complicated and even after that there is room for maneuver. The proposal for demonstration land has been rejected once by the provincial government but the LBMFS can still get some land if it has the ability to come up with a strong proposal that expresses the collective action by all communities (FNs and non-FNs) at the ground level.

The reasons for disparity between the theory and practice of the LBMF's sustainable forestry program are explained, like that of BRAC, by collaboration, contingency, and resource dependency theory. It has been shown that the organization, or to be precise, the paid staff level have failed to establish

credibility among the stakeholders as the secondary convener. This is because of a lose organizational structure and inappropriate personnel who could not communicate with the different forest stakeholders as a neutral 'third party' organization. Also, the problem domain is far too complicated in British Columbia and too many differing interests are involved in the LBMF program. Therefore, with an unstable organizational structure and a vastly complicated problem domain, neither the organization (paid staff), nor the Board of Directors and other participants in the LBMF program could precisely define the problem domain and work toward that. As the primary convener of the Model Forest Program, the federal government also has failed to play its role effectively to mitigate the conflicts within the organization and helps to build a strong organizational structure. However, as LBMFS's sustainable forestry program is not predesigned by the federal government and the organization is significantly free of federal government's direct authority, it has much more capacity to pursue its major aim of building the criteria and indicators of sustainable forestry than BRAC's Social Forestry program. The institutional environment is proving to be conducive for the First Nations in terms of pressing forward their demands regarding management of forests in the Clayquot Sound region.

The SF program of BRAC and the LBMFS show one common trend in their forestry programs despite the differences in their socio-economic and geo-political settings. This is dependency on donors for funds. The LBMFS's dependence on federal government for financial support has thrown the program in uncertainty. Like BRAC, the LBMFS has to produce yearly reports for the federal government to ensure flow of money for the next year. Again, like BRAC, there is no resistance from within the LBMFS to try to reduce dependence on the federal government; instead, with an ineffective organizational structure the LBMFS is mostly engaged in satisfying the federal government with reports describing all the positive aspects of the organization. It has effectively kept the organization away from finding out the major dysfunction within the structure and trying to find ways to remove them.

This study is not intended to make generalizations about sustainable forestry in the developing and the developed worlds. Instead, the findings should be viewed within the very specific contexts of the Social Forestry program of BRAC in Bangladesh and the Sustainable Forestry program of LBMFS in Canada. However, I believe that there is room for improvement in both situations given the rigidity of their environments. Therefore, I would like to make some suggestions for these two forestry programs that can be considered by both organizations in their respective contexts.

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee exposes the vulnerability of its management system in handling a complex task like social forestry. The management of the SF program is not well equipped with information regarding forestry and even, does not have a structured information sharing system. For an organization of BRAC's size and reputation in development programs, it is rather unusual to not have a modern information system in the era of Information Technology. BRAC should introduce extensive use of computers in its regional and local area offices to manage the details of every forestry programs and keep

the records there. In addition, BRAC should introduce a web site for its SF program to be accessed by both its management and the women members. It may give the management the opportunity to compare its SF program with different forestry programs around the world, and help them to identify the loopholes in their program and find possible solutions to those problems. For the women beneficiaries, access to information technology may open the gate to a wider world from which they can obtain valuable knowledge about environmental degradation and the relationships of social forestry, agroforestry, and other related technical and social knowledge to environmental improvement. While the management of the SF program can enhance its social capital through access to a wide world of knowledge and can also build constructive relations with different programs around the world, the poor women can develop a sense of awareness of their own about the real implications of social forestry, deforestation, and also, build network of relationships with other forestry programs. It may sound rather absurd in the context of rural Bangladesh where the women can hardly write or read their own native language, so how can they use web site or handle computers when these are all in English? When the Grameen Bank that finances small business and entrepreneurs in rural areas of Bangladesh introduced cellular phones among its women members in the rural areas, doubts were shown from many corners of the society about the feasibility of the project. However, today the Grameen Phone project has proved to be a success both for the organization and the rural women. The organization is able to keep in constant contact with the members in rural areas and the rural women are now in a stronger bargaining positions in doing business in rural markets. For example, a rural woman with a cellular phone provided by Grameen Bank can call other places to check the price of the commodity she is selling and then, can force the middle man to give her the same price. This way, she cannot be cheated by the middlemen anymore as she used to be before she had the cell phone (World Bank 2000:73). The Grameen Bank is also thinking of establishing telefax and email services in rural areas for its women members. Therefore, providing web services to the members of the SF program should be possible as well although it will take some time for the women to understand the complexities of the system. As the language of the computers will be in English, the BRAC officials for the women can translate it into Bengali. This way, a strong communication system can be developed between the women members and the BRAC officials within the country and across the country with similar forestry programs. However, we should remember that the introduction of internet education would only make sense in the general context of BRAC's development programs (health, education, credit, and forestry). In other words, this cannot be effectively introduced in isolation in the forestry programs. Financially, it may be quite expensive to start this program, however, the long-term benefits (mentioned above) should justify these costs. The question of sustainability needs to be integrated in the high school curriculum in the country as a whole to develop awareness for the environment among the public. Sustainability issues should be more central to the training of BRAC officials in all the development programs including the SF program.

As one of its overall development principles, as we have seen, BRAC focuses exclusively on rural women in its development programs and all the Village Organizations at present are formed of only women. In the SF program, BRAC does the same thing. All the members of the SF program are women and the SF program can easily be regarded as a 'women-only' project (Rojas 1989). Mayoux (1995) warns that one should not be over optimistic about NGO-initiated 'women's forestry programs' which she thinks, perpetuate the women's low status in the community and in the broader society. She argues that although the NGOs in developing counties would like to preach their high sense of morality by doing women-only forestry programs, they do its because the men very often do not want to join the program because the benefit from the program is minimal. Therefore, the women-only program, according to Mayoux, may become an easy means for the NGOs to exploit cheat and docile labor of women in developing countries. These forestry programs also neglect the tension and conflict between women themselves. Mayoux points out that for rural women class is differentiated by varied economic conditions of their families (e.g., extremely poor women, women with some assets, women with strong family backing in the village or community) that may cause conflict among them in terms of resource allocation and authority in the rural development programs. This is so true of BRAC's SF program as there are members from all classes of women in rural Bangladesh. At least in the case of the Social Forestry program, BRAC should encourage rural men as well to join the program. The collective membership of both men and women may strengthen the capacity of the program to a significant extent. With men on their side, the women may be able to prevent many undesirable occurrences such as fence theft and other problems that pose a threat to the program. Moreover, a combined group of both men and women can be more effective in pressing their voices in the SF program that so far has not happened. The message of deforestation and the importance of planting trees can be spread more quickly and easily if the Village Organizations in SF program are formed by both men and women.

The vulnerability of the Social Forestry program of BRAC is further exacerbated by the fact that the participants of the program, the poor rural women, have no voice in the decision-making process and are almost being forced into the situations, such as, planting foreign trees. To make the program really sustainable and to achieve sustainable forestry, BRAC should experiment with a *pilot project*. The tenure of the project will be a minimum of five years. In this pilot project, a management committee will be formed of both women members from BRAC's Village Organizations and their husbands or male relatives. An upper body of the committee will decide on the membership and the total number of members needed for the pilot project. The BRAC management will work as external agents who will engage in frequent discussions with the local management committee. While the villagers will take the major decisions as to the choice of tree species, the BRAC management will work toward formation of network of cooperation with other non-member villagers (in order to set the stage for inclusion of as many poor people as possible later on). The BRAC management will frequently engage in dialogues with the local committee and may suggest changes, if needed, in the

plans. Also, the BRAC management will provide those committee members with technical and financial support as they do now. Tenure pattern affects the program significantly. Therefore, for the entire preliminary period, those rural people will have to own the land given to them by BRAC. Proper legal documentation of agreement between the BRAC management and the villagers will precede clear understanding of the agreement by both parties. The present management of the Social Forestry program of BRAC should, in order to facilitate the functioning of the local forest management committee, remove its apathetic attitude that it presently has about the traditional tree knowledge of the rural people. However, as the financing poses the biggest threat to the duration of the pilot project, it is the European Commission's Food Security Unit that should provide the rural people with the money for at least first five years of the project. Doing so, the Commission has to have faith in the rural people as well and can, as a matter of fact, play a crucial role in convincing the BRAC management of the villagers' capacity to undertake such a project. When an interactive communication network is built between all three parties, BRAC, village management, and the Food Security Unit of the European Commission, it may encourage the government to join the venture since a cooperative forest management project can only benefit all the stakeholders, not some selected ones. If BRAC can build up good working relationship with the government, it will mean future possibilities of getting land from the government agencies and expanding the pilot project.

The dependency of BRAC's SF program on donor funds, although seen as natural in the context of Bangladesh, would have to be reduced. This can effectively be achieved by developing strong collaborative relationships with the government. A special branch with qualified conflict management personnel should be created within the organizations the principal goal of which is establish regular effective communications with the government agencies. This may not be as easy as it sounds like (given the stubborn attitude and the jealousy of the government officials) but this seems to be an effective solution to the elimination of absolute dependence on foreign funds.

To a significant extent, the blame for the failure of Long Beach Model Forest Society to demonstrate or to help build the criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management in the Long Beach area may be attributed to the primary convener, i.e., the federal government. The federal government failed to act positively and to take a strong position in the socio-political scenario of the LBMF program. It is unwise to put all the blame on the LBMFS for doing little at the 'ground level'. The fact is, the organization has not received any precise technical advice or guidance from the federal government except for funds. The federal government must ensure a strong and stable organizational structure of the LBMFS with qualified and politically neutral staff. It is necessary to develop a healthy working relationship with the rest of the organization—the Board of Directors, the Administration Committee, the Working Groups, and the Advisory Committee. Credibility can be developed only when the LBMFS staff and the rest of the organization work as a team. So far, the organization's staff and the Board of Directors have not developed good working relationships based on mutual trust.

The participation of the First Nations may be strengthened by the participation of the grassroots First Nation people in the LBMFS meeting. Then again, it may be equally applied to the participation of all other sectors in the organization. This stems from the idea of a weekly or monthly meeting between the First Nation directors at the Board and the First Nation communities they represent. It may give the directors and the grassroots people the valuable opportunity to share and exchange ideas of sustainable forest management practice. By virtue of working together, at the ground level, they can also, develop strong and unanimous reasons for joining the LBMF program. Presently, as we have seen, the First Nations directors have hardly any accountability to their respective constituencies. The idea of an outdoor meeting, perhaps twice a month, between the organization's staff (who are actively engaged in the whole process of LBMF program through their positions and research projects) and the grassroots may be considered so that the grassroots have direct communication with the staff. It should be a great opportunity for both parties to learn from each other and use that knowledge to help find the criteria of Sustainable Forest Management. However, the success of these endeavors depends largely on LBMFS having its own demonstration project. With an independent demonstration project, the Long Beach Model Forest Society and its partners can effectively engage in experiments that may eventually lead to SFM in the region. One important aspect of this independent demonstration project should be to incorporate First Nations' traditional ecological knowledge. In order to do that, FNs should be involved from the beginning of the project. This is crucial since the First Nations have their own notions of sustainable resource management and their traditional knowledge can be positively used to create environmental database (e.g., wildlife, hunting, fishing, trapping etc. Freeman et al. (1993). Sallenave (1994) proposes an integrated system of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) where TEK is used as a tool for active participation of native peoples in the EIA process.

In both cases of sustainable forestry, in Bangladesh and in Canada, much depends on the willingness of the national governments to cooperate with the local communities through the non-governmental organizations. The suggestions recommended in this study can be implemented only in a favorable environment, i.e., favorable government policy. In Bangladesh, the need for a precise land tenure and tree ownership policy is iterated time and again, and still there is none. Without this, the sustainability of the SF program of BRAC and similar programs in Bangladesh carried out by other NGOs remain uncertain. The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee's dependence on foreign donors for funds has made the organization distanced from the national government and therefore, has made the organization weak in bargaining with the government. Again, BRAC needs to establish regular working relationships with government agencies, especially the Forest Department, the Land Revenue Agency. It will strengthen BRAC's land leasing program. For the Long Beach Model Forest Society, it is sufficient to say that if the idea of the Model Forest Program had come from the federal government, then it is it which should build strong interactive relations with the forest stakeholders in Long Beach area and elsewhere. It should shrug off its sit-

and-watch policy, which it has done so far, and help an organization like the LBMFS to act effectively in the Long Beach region.

The idea of sustainable forestry is almost parallel with the concept of sustainable development. Sustainable forestry practice in different countries uses different names but the theme remains the same—people's involvement in the forest management practice. The goals and objectives and other aspects of sustainable forestry of BRAC and LBMFS may vary widely, the very idea has given both organizations tremendous opportunity to realize the theme. There are drawbacks that generate from the environment these two organizations work within, but they are not impossible to remove.

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APPENDIX

List of Acronyms

PO	Program Organizer
AM	Area Manager
RM	Regional Manager
ED	Executive Director
ADAB	Association of Development Agencies of Bangladesh
PUDO	Private Voluntary Development Organizations
NAB	NGO Affairs Bureau
RSS	Regional Sector Specialist
RDP	Rural Development Program
RCP	Rural Credit Program
RED	Research and Evaluation Division
FD	Forest Department
VO	Village Organization
REP	Rural Enterprise Program
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
CNFS	Canadian National Forest Strategy
EIG	Employment and Income Generating
FSU	Food Security Unit
TARC	Training and Resource Centre
EU	European Union
LGRD	Local Government and Rural Development
CFS	Canadian Forest Service
MFP	Model Forest Program
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
FN	First Nations
CRB	Central Region Board
RIC	Rainforest Interpretive Centre
CCFM	Canadian Council of Forest Ministers
CIP	Community Internship Program
NAFA	National Aboriginal Forestry Association
FRMA	Forest Resource Management Act